TANINTHARYI YAZAWIN

THE CHRONICLES OF TENASSERIM

U Gyi Sein

Tanintharyi Yazawin

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the Chronicles of Tenasserim

by

U Gyi Sein

translated by Thet Ko Ko

edited by Jim Potter

and

the People of Myeik and Tanintharyi

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Research into the history of Tenasserim will always be a collaborative work in progress. New information constantly surfaces, meaning that mistakes and different interpretations are inevitable. Therefore, corrections and suggestions are welcome. If judged valid, they will be used to improve the accuracy of the text. This is a primary reason why this book is available in print-on-demand form rather than being consigned to the academic publishing industry.

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THE MAUNGLAW INSCRIPTION, C. 1080 CE

Rubbing of a bas-relief carving on a stone stele, found near Maunglaw-kwin (see note 151), depicting an earth-touching Buddha over three lines of Pali in Mon script. Scholars such as U Mya and G.H. Luce suggested it was a donation from a king of Bagan, though the connection is tenuous. In the late 11th century, Tenasserim was governed by the Kingdom of Takwa (see chapter 2).

Old Burma – Early Pagan, by G.H. Luce & Bo-Hmu Ba Shin,
vol. 1, p. 26, & vol. 3, plate 15a

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Preface

This book was originally a collaboration for which U Gyi Sein served as lead compiler and editor in 1929. This annotated translation is similar, because interpretation of Sein's text was only possible with the involvement of a large number of local people. Their invaluable contributions are noted by initials in the footnotes, including Naing Soe [NS], Thet Ko Ko [TKK], Ni Ni Aung [NNA], Pann Hnin Yee Oo [PHY], Ni Ni Chit [NNC], Thaw Zin Latt [TZL], and Saw Tam Aungkohtwe [TAK]. Further assistance was given by countless people throughout Tanintharyi whose kindness, generosity and enthusiasm is only matched by their resilience. I offer my deepest gratitude and admiration to all of them.

That said, the entire text, notes and images are the responsibility of the editor [JP], who alone is to blame for any mistakes. All unattributed footnotes are those of the editor as well.

And without question, there are errors and gaps in both translation and annotation. These were unavoidable in such a new and complex project. Instead of viewing them as problems, however, we should see them as opportunities to invite still more voices to the conversation. I firmly believe that everyone has something valuable to contribute. Therefore, if anyone wishes to add comments or corrections, please contact me at: jamesandhookbooks@gmail.com.

J.P., 2023

Introduction

According to local scholars, the *Tanintharyi Yazawin* was compiled from palm-leaf and parabaik manuscripts in the 1920s. The lead editor was U Gyi Sein, a gentleman from Mon State, though his effort required a grand collaboration of monks, elders, teachers and local citizens. The documents came from a variety of places, most importantly a monastery in Banlaw. The book was published in 1929 then re-printed in 1992. Both editions were in Burmese, and almost nobody outside the region read them.

Consequently, the book is nearly unknown beyond Tanintharyi. Myanmar historians have rarely mentioned it despite assumptions about the place that are generally mistaken. Some who did read the book dismissed it with prejudice. Thai researchers never noticed despite detailed stories of enduring kingdoms ruled by Tai-speakers, and regardless of the importance of 'Tanao-si' to the history of Ayutthaya. Western scholars were also in the dark. Mergui had been a backwater of the empire since annexation in 1824, and its historical treasures were largely ignored even by those with immense curiosity like Gordon Luce, and a *coterie* of French scholars including Charles Duroiselle, Georges Cœdès, Paul Pelliot and Gabriel Ferrand. More surprisingly it escaped the attention of J.S. Furnivall and Maurice Collis, both of whom served as deputy commissioner of Mergui.

Local rumor says the British suppressed the book because they feared it would inspire an uprising. The idea was understandable after the Hsaya San rebellion of 1930–32, but I have not found any corroborating evidence in the India Office Records. I also doubt very much that Luce would have obeyed the policy if it did exist, and certainly not after 1948. More likely, the book simply fell into the deep shadows of our historical ignorance, like Tenasserim itself.

Kyaw Din had provided a very brief summary of local history in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society* of 1917, which said most of the old manuscripts were burned in a town fire.[1] Furnivall and Maung Kyi O

1 Transcribed in Appendix 1 of this book.

added a few more pieces in 1922,[2] but attention shifted away to the foundering empire, and in 1941 to the arrival of the Japanese army. Then from 1962 until 2012 (and again in 2021), Tanintharyi was almost entirely cut off from the world by Myanmar's sociopathic military. Some work continued among brave and dedicated local scholars, but this was limited by difficult and even dangerous circumstances.

I only came across the book during research that began in 2015. I had accepted the story of a devastating fire, yet kept stumbling across faint references to the 'Myeik chronicles.' After seeing the phrase in Dr. Khin Thidar's article on Buddhist sites in Myeik,[3] I inquired at the municipal library. Wise librarians understood my bumbling description and quickly located a tattered copy. When I held it in my hands I wondered, "Did nobody know because nobody asked?"

Apparently so. Tanintharyi has a rich, influential, enduring and largely autonomous history that was buried under misinformation from larger neighbors. Its *yazawin* is a critical first step in revealing that past. A second step is the great depth of community knowledge. Myeik residents and upcountry people can offer corroborating narratives and locations for all of the important sites. There is a staggering amount of other information available simply for the price of inquiry.

Names and Boundaries

Tanintharyi is the Myanmar pronunciation of *Tāṇa-sirī*, an ancient Pali phrase that translates as 'resplendent refuge' or 'prosperous land'.[4] All subsequent names derive from this source, such as Tanah Seri, Tenassery, Tenasserim, Tanao-si, Tanintharyi, etc. None of them are right or wrong, nor do they have any inherent political meaning. They are simply a single name pronounced in different languages. This is also true for Mergui. Origins of the name are unclear, but we do know that

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2 JBRS v. 12, 1922. Transcribed in full in Appendices 2 & 3 of this work.

3 Khin Thidar 2007.

4 From the online Pali Text Society dictionary, p. 299 : "Tāṇa (nt.) [from Vedic root trā, variation of *ter in tarati. Orig. bringing or seeing through] shelter, protection, refuge, esp. as tt. of shelter & peace offered by the Dhamma." p. 711 : "Sirī (siri) (f.) [Vedic śrī] 1. splendour, beauty Sn 686 (instr. siriyā); J vi.318 (siriṇ dhāreti). — 2. luck, glory, majesty, prosperity S i. 44 (nom. siri)."

derivatives—Markhī, Marit, Myrguim, Mergui, Mergen, Myeik, etc.—are just different forms of one name. By the same process, local speech has transformed “Myeik” into “Beik.”

For the translated text of this book, Tanintharyi and Myeik are used whenever U Gyi Sein did so. The footnotes usually employ Tenasserim and Mergui because they are beautiful words and I like them. If people want to squabble over the matter, please leave me out of it.

Note also that the *yazawin* defines Tanintharyi by the limits of its ancient kingdoms. The territory included watersheds of the Greater and Lesser Tenasserim rivers up to a narrows at about 13° 25' north latitude, southeast to the Mawdaung/Singkhon Pass, and west to rivermouths around Mergui. The Lenya River is often included, but areas further south were mostly uninhabited until recently. Similarly, islands of the Mergui Archipelago below Dawei are included but not the southern islands below Bokpyin. The northern coastal limit was usually somewhere around the town of Palaw. Areas east of the Tenasserim range are definitely excluded. Even Kuiburi, which historically was the eastern terminus of the trade portage, was not considered part of the old autonomous kingdoms. Note however that boundaries were indefinite because power faded with distance. Some historians have imagined this as a kind of ‘royal mandala’, but it was simply a product of logistics. Please see note 81 and the maps in Appendix 7, one of which is included here.

possible extent of the kingdoms of Tāṇa-sirī, c. 901–1531 CE

Therefore, the larger borders of British Tenasserim and ‘Tanintharyi Division’ do not apply. That is to say, the modern districts of Dawei, Mawlamyine and Kawthaung were separate from historical *Tāṇa-sirī*. Accordingly, the history and culture of the first two are

quite distinct from the Mergui region, and Kawthaung was never considered to be within Myanmar until the British made it so by restricting Thais from encroaching across the Pakchan River in the 1840s[5]

Land, Sea, Monsoon

Why these limits? It appears that they closely conform to logistical realities. Most importantly, the Tenasserim River links an extensive network of waterways. These facilitate travel not only downstream but upstream as well, because huge tides reverse the flow up to a hundred kilometers inland.[6] Importantly, this happens without dangerous tidal bores that affected the Salween and Sittang rivers. The surge weakens further on, but creates a useful period of slack water almost two-thirds of the way across the peninsula at Theinkun. People still use this feature to move about with reduced effort.[7]

Historical focus has been on international traders who sailed in from the west and drifted upriver, or else floated down from the east after a short portage. However, the tidal reversal was surely more important for local residents who collected dammar, timber and other forest products, farmed rice and vegetables, harvested orchards, caught game and fish, traded goods, pursued opportunities, sought refuge, attended festivals, raised families, and traveled to monasteries for mindfulness and study.[8]

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5 IOR/H/MISC/663, pp. 65–85, 'The Bentinck Minute', 22 Aug. 1829. IOR/F/4/1926/82649; journal entries for 9–14 April 1839 (also in Helfer 2019). *Selected Correspondence* pp. 49-54, 189-90, 205.

6 The tidal surge regularly arrives in force at Tanintharyi township, 70 km upriver from Myeik. A British forestry officer said its influence reached Ta Ra Bwin, GPS 12.29, 99.034, which is another 35 km. further up the Greater Tenasserim River. "Local motor junks" could go 17 km. more to Theindaw. (Beresford-Barrett 1943, pp. 1-2). On the Lesser Tenasserim, I observed tidal slack water at Letpanthaung Bridge, GPS 11.903, 99.12. This is 120 km from the sea by river, and over half-way to the Gulf of Thailand as the crow flies.

7 For the hydrography and climate of the region, see: Potter 2019, pp. 8–16.

8 This is still true. On my first trip up the river the boat halted unexpectedly at Pa Wa, well short of Tanintharyi town. The crew fled the scene, but friendly shopkeepers told me not to worry. We waited out the afternoon heat with cold drinks, then at slack water just before the tide changed, a gentle monk [*cont*.]

Likewise at sea, the Mergui Archipelago creates sheltered waterways by blocking waves and weather from the Bay of Bengal. Weary sailors used these channels as refuges for at least a millennium, if not several of them. Around 1462, for example, *mu'allim* Ahmad ibn Mājid advised mariners to make course for 'Buttom' (the Domel Islands group) to take advantage of the *Tākwā bari* (Strait of Takwa).[9] He was certainly not the first or last Asian sailor to use this 300 kilometer inner passage. Moken, Malay, Tamil, Chinese and other navigators—including the people of Tenasserim—did so long before its 'discovery' by Thomas Forrest in 1783.[10]

This geography is inseparable from a monsoon which dumps four meters of rain on Myeik between May and September (and much more in the mountains). The deluge makes rivers dangerous during the wet season, but also scours out deep channels for navigation during drier months. The rain facilitates rice production on riverine islands as well. First, it augments brackish floods that deposit fertile silt, then allows diligent farmers to flush salt from their fields. A humid growing period and reliable dry season prepare the grain for harvest.

The intensity and regularity of this cycle also favor the growth of fragrant timber. Such enormous amounts of agarwood and other aromatics were exported by ancient kingdoms that they were apparently named after the products. Thus, *takkola*, a word meaning fragrant wood in several Indian languages, may have inspired 'Takwa', a kingdom founded in 901 CE to exploit the trees (see chapter 2). Possibly it was also linked to a 2nd century kingdom called 'Tacola' by Ptolemy and 'T'ouen-siun' by Chinese envoys. Intriguingly, the latter name resembles the Chinese word for agarwood: *tchien-xiang*.[11]

The monsoon is linked to maritime geography as well. Before the advent of steam power, southwest winds drove ships eastward from

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[*cont*.] arrived. He was traveling upriver to a distant monastery and guided me into shallow canoe. We putted to Mawton where two boys drove us to Tanintharyi on motorbikes. My venerable guardian smiled, then set off on foot to parts unknown. It was a vital lesson: tide is more important than time.

9 ibn Mājid, BnF Ms. Arabe 2292, folios 103–106; & Tibbetts 1979, For a map image, see Appendix 7 of this book.

10 Forrest 1792.

11 See note 6 of this book.

India. Historians have carelessly cited this fact without explaining how navigation was possible in the total darkness of rainy monsoon nights, or how ships could avoid being wrecked on open lee shores like that of Martaban or Takuapa. One strategy was to use the sailing approaches to Tenasserim. Amid clouds and rain that severely restricted celestial navigation, lofty landmarks like Cabosa Island and the Great Western Torres guided captains through the perilous last miles. These sit safely in deep water, and their leeward sides offered fresh water, food, timber and rest to exhausted sailors and broken boats. Tides, anchorages and sheltered waters then allowed them to approach the coast cautiously, and estuaries provided safe roadsteads to wait for the northerlies.[12]

Along with the vast forests and mountains of the Tenasserim range, these riverine and marine waterways formed a self-contained arena. Beyond them were different worlds which residents didn't really need, and frankly were better off without.

Geography thus created another circumstance which is essential to the history of Tenasserim : isolation. Its rugged location and heavy monsoon restricted entry and exit for six months a year. This played out in a number of ways. It created massive logistical hurdles that appear to have thwarted foreign aggression for centuries. It also compelled foreign travelers to stay for long periods in which they developed deep ties with communities. The connections were eventually woven into a remarkably diverse cultural fabric. Isolation also produced a strong tradition of charity and tolerance among residents who had to rely on each other while their towns and villages were cut off. Perhaps most importantly, it provided them with space in which their diversity evolved into a unique identity that endures to this day.

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12 See notes 6, 42 & 99. Sailing is essential to the history of Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, the ocean is usually a blank space in historical research. This is a grave flaw. It means nothing to say that winds could blow a vessel across the Bay of Bengal if there were no stars to navigate by during relentless rains, no way to stop before destruction on a lee shore, and no place to recover from the extreme hardships the sea. Therefore, I believe, the details of sailing should receive the same amount of attention given to sherds, inscriptions and texts. Furthermore, sailing directions should be considered as some of the most reliable primary sources that we have. For more, please see: Potter, "Sea to Sea: opportunities for archaeology in Mergui and Tenasserim," ResearchGate, 2023.

Full discussion of such a complex identity is too large a subject for this introduction, but we can present one major theme : the Pali name is well-earned, because *Tāṇa-sirī* was indeed a refuge for centuries.

For example, people of Bamar descent are the most prevalent ethnicity in the region today, and their presence is clearly old and deep. Examples of Burmese narratives, nomenclature, trade, migration, iconography and thriving religious interaction date back at least a thousand years in Tenasserim. The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* was written in Burmese, and apparently its manuscript sources were as well. Architecture and Buddhist imagery show a strong Myanmar influence. Inscriptions also suggest donations from an 11th century Bagan king and a 13th century Bamar merchant.[13]

All of this is undeniable, yet evidence of actual administration from Bagan, Bago or Ava is almost non-existent prior to 1760. Claims to the contrary evaporate upon inspection. For example, an extensive search for Tanintharyi in Myanmar's chronicles has been underway for years with scant results.[14] The name barely appears prior to the 16th century, and remains peripheral until 1759. In the *Glass Palace Chronicle*, Tenasserim is briefly mentioned just twice. Both times it was said to be a vassal of Alaungsithu, whose chapter is filled with fairy tales so wild that even nationalists cannot swallow them.[15] Likewise, inscriptions with religious donations by Bagan kings have been vastly inflated to mean enduring conquest,[16] while boundary claims have either been

13 Respectively: the Maunglaw inscription, possibly c. 1080 CE; OBEP v.1, pp. 26 & 46. v.2, p. 10, v.3, plate 15; image in the title pages of this book. And the Tawnauklae inscription, 1269 CE; OBEP v.1, p. 27, note 103, & OBI v.3, № 34, p.53.

14 All results of this project will be published on ResearchGate under the editor's name [JP] in the coming years.

15 See note 126 of this book. Among the culprits in edifying the Alaungsithu fables are Aung-Thwin 1985, & Lubeigt 1999.

16 For example, the Maunglaw inscription has a possible (but unconfirmed) link to King Sawlu of Bagan (see image in title pages). Yet even if it was commissioned by that king, it says nothing about political power in Tenasserim. In fact, religious donations to distant places could signify a *lack* of political power, such as Mindon's donation to British-held Dawei in 1876 (note 163).

poorly investigated[17] or else treated with servility instead of skepticism.[18] Even between 1548 and 1581 when Myanmar's expansion was well documented, Tenasserim only surrendered its customs revenue. When Naresuan sent Thai forces to resume control of the region around 1590, they fought against local inhabitants, not the army of Myanmar.[19]

In other words, despite extensive evidence of Bamar *cultural* presence in Tenasserim, there is little evidence for *political* presence by Bagan, Toungoo, Bago or Ava prior to 1760. Consequently, it is much more likely that Bamar people came to the far south as refugees from Myanmar rather than subjects of its kingdoms.

Accounting for these facts requires replacement of the simplistic 'kings and conquest' model with a messy process of communal migration (a change that is long overdue in historiography). The latter accounts for deep cultural influences and vague epigraphic evidence while leaving ample room for brief periods of political interference from

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17 The prime example is 'Takwa', which an inscription from 1269 claimed as a boundary of Bagan. For a hundred years historians assumed this meant Takuapa, and some extended that claim to Phuket and Nakhon Si Thammarat. Their assumption was based on little more than the initial three letters, but it was convenient. Unquestionably, though, 'Takwa' was Htauk-kwa on the Tenasserim River. This fact is confirmed by sailing directions with precise latitudes, community knowledge, chapter two of this book, and the actual site itself (see note 6). ¶ Secondly, even if the name had been properly investigated it is impossible to know if the inscription was merely a boast. Writing a name on a wall is literally the easiest political act of all, while occupation of a distant, hostile country is by far the most difficult. Until someone explains how Bagan could have overcome the enormous logistical obstacles of occupying Tenasserim, inscriptions claiming ownership must be set aside. In fact, all royal boundary claims should be viewed with hard skepticism. Kings and their flunkies uttered lots of words. Some were true; many were not.

18 The prime example here is a votive tablet ascribed to Anawrahta, c. 1057 CE. A narrative of vast conquest was spun upon this single, inherently mobile object that could have come to Myeik at any point in the last thousand years. Unfortunately, it has no corroboration and means nothing by itself. Moreover its provenance is extremely suspicious, and its survival on an exposed hillside for a millennium of monsoons is physically impossible. A far more likely explanation is that it was deposited there for political reasons after the 1962 coup (please see note 15).

19 Cushman 2000, pp. 133–39. And: Twin-Thin, v.2, pp. 46, 73–6, 164–73, 230–34.

Lower Burma.[20] It also avoids contorting history to fit current politics, or historical territory to fit modern borders.

If this is correct, why did people leave familiar territory in Myanmar for a remote, foreign land? Details are slim, but 'push' factors may have prevailed prior to 1760. These probably included drought, crop failure, epidemics and conflict. An additional motivation might have been flight from servitude, either debt slavery to elites or the state slavery of corvée labor and military conscription. For example, James Low reported on the hopeless fate of Myanmar's debtor slaves and their families in 1825 :

> The condition of the debtors ostensibly originates in a contract formally entered into by the parties and liable to be dissolved by a repayment of the sum lent; but under the Burman sway, a person of this description was rarely found able to emancipate himself; and his debt, with all the accumulated sums and value of articles given to him and his family, descended to the latter at his death.[21]

For state slavery, we can reference the reforms of Alaungpaya who restricted ownership of slaves by private elites. Far from freeing them, he did this to gain greater manpower through forced labor, essentially just transferring ownership to himself.[22] This struggle for labor between kings and nobles is a central theme that runs throughout the country's history. For commoners, refusing to serve meant severe punishment, and often the only legal alternative was exchanging one master for another. Even that could be difficult to achieve, particularly for female debtors.[23] A final option was to flee beyond reach. For example, demands under Bodawpaya (r. 1782–1819) became so heavy that the

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20 Two of the Mon chronicles—the *Mottama Yazawin* and the *Razadarit Yazawi*n —mention invasions of Tenasserim in the 14th century (Pyinnya 1927, pp. 9–13; Naing Pann Hla 2005, pp. 38–9. Also see notes 77 & 177 of this book). Some were briefly successful; others were military failures. In both cases, few details were included, and no logistical information was provided.

21 Low, *History of Tenasserim*, chapter 2. Note that claims by modern historians that slavery in Southeast Asia was 'not so bad' need to be closely re-examined. Fundamentally, we should seek voices of the oppressed as well as the masters. Currently, almost none of the former exist for Southeast Asia (see note 241).

22 Lieberman 1984, p. 260.

23 Symes 1800, pp. 123–4, 154.

countryside was filled with dacoits, nomads and forest dwellers who chose hard lives in the jungle over harder lives of servitude.[24] In a very real sense, the same bitter choice has been forced upon dissenters from the latest coup. Many must choose between serving a murderous kleptocracy or fleeing to the borderlands.

We don't have specific examples of Bamars fleeing Bagan for Tenasserim, but we have a first-hand account of people escaping conflict in Ava and Bago. In 1745 Pierre Poivre and his party were forced into Mergui by the monsoon. While was trapped there for months, the French horticulturalist took detailed notes. Among them he wrote :

> The province of Tenasserim was filled with Peguan and Avanese refugees who, to avoid the misfortunes of the war that was devastating their homeland, had withdrawn into the calm lands of Siam. Among these fugitives, we saw the prince of Tavoy, a lord of the family of the king of Ava and formerly the governor of the province of Tavoy, adjacent to Tenasserim.[25]

Notably, even at this late stage Tenasserim retained a degree of autonomy as subordinate kingdom of Ayutthaya. Thus it was something of a refuge from Thai authorities too.

After 1760, 'pull' factors may have become more important. Probably chief among these was hope of finding fertile, irrigated land which was difficult to obtain in upper Myanmar. Likewise, business opportunities and self-reinvention have motivated migrants throughout history.[26] Other settlers were camp followers, ex-soldiers and officials of the Myanmar armies that repeatedly invaded Thailand until 1812. Alongside them, merchants and gardeners seem to have gained early footholds in the acquired province. In the past, local usage confirmed this influx by distinguishing between 'Bagan' Bamars and later arrivals.[27]

A similar pattern likely occurred among a second group—Tai-speakers who arrived in Tenasserim perhaps a thousand years ago and eventually assumed command of its kingdoms. The history of Tai

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24 Koenig 1990, ch.2, especially pp. 33–5, & pp. 219–25, et al.

25 Breazeale, JSS 97 (2009) , p. 191.

26 For examples of comparative history in migration patterns and their enduring legacies, see: Potter, *Into the Dark House* (2020).

27 Maung Maung Shwe. "Commemorative Golden Jubilee Myeik History," p. 7.

migration from southern China and northern Vietnam is immensely complex, but Chris Baker adeptly explored what is known and what can be speculated on.[28] Several themes emerged. For one, the Tai are not a single genetic group, but rather a collection of "constructed social identities which evolve over time." Second, they have a remarkable ability to absorb useful traits from others. Third, instead of a linear, comprehensive 'just-so' story, Baker suggests "thousands of short-distance moves by relatively small groups of people," occasionally punctuated by tragedy and conflict.

Furthermore, though Tai migration was fragmented, it retained common ground in origin stories. Baker writes that, "the dominant motif in the foundation legends of many Tai *muang* is a migration in search of good rice land." This ideal was defined as a broad plain between mountains with good soil and rivers, and lucrative trade if possible. Several places in Tenasserim fit that description very well. The surprise is not that Tais arrived at these sites, but that their presence was forgotten.

We don't know which groups or routes led to *Tāṇa-sirī*. However, one candidate is a movement from Yunnanese areas near the Mekong to the Kok and Ping river valleys in the 10th and 11th centuries.[29] Compelled to move for unknown reasons, perhaps some groups continued south, bypassing the unfamiliar marshlands and forbidding *kanazo* forests of Mon-dominated Dvaravati until they arrived in the more suitable refuge of Tenasserim.

This hypothesis seems to fit the chronology of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. Sein's text indicates that the early kingdoms were founded by Mon nobles in the 8th and 10th centuries. Their populations were very diverse, however, and Tais ('Shans') had come to the fore by the 12th century. Subsequently, they founded a series of kingdoms that closely coincided with the emergence of other Tai polities such as Sukhothai, Martaban, Hsenwi, Chiang Mai, Mong Mao and elsewhere in the late 13th century.

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28 Baker, Chris. "From Yue to Thai." JSS 90 (2002).

29 The initial movement is listed in Baker 2002 (JSS 90), pp. 8–9, but any migration further south to Tenasserim is only my own hypothesis. At present it is only conjecture without evidence.

I believe the autonomous kingdom of 'Tanao-si' belongs alongside them. And further, a group called the 'Tai Tanao' should be added to the long list of Tai peoples. Only excavation can confirm their identity, but it is significant that current residents hold on to their memory despite decades of severe conflict, poverty and nationalist prejudice that cut so many other threads of history. In upcountry villages, even ethnic Bamars politely insist that visitors should understand how the 'Tanintharyi Shan' were distinct from other Shans like the 'Yoedaya' or 'Yun'.

Eventually the Tai Tanao were joined by the 'Yoedaya', or Thais from the kingdom of Ayutthaya. Their political relationship is confusing (see below); their ethnic relationship can only be speculated on, and in fact hard distinctions may not have existed. The Tai diaspora is endlessly adaptive and did not require state intervention. Thus, a continuum of subtly different Tai-speakers likely permeated the region from coast to coast long before attempts to confine their identity to a particular lord or *muang*. This remains true today in border areas that are still home to thousands of stateless Tais. They lack official status within the governments they are supposed to obey, yet they *belong* to the place in ways that distant rulers cannot match. They have deep connections on both sides of imaginary lines that they cross at will, and in true Tenasserim style, they effortlessly cross cultural lines too. Their identity emanates from within; it cannot be written on a plastic card.[30]

Nonetheless, the rise of the Thai kingdom likely affected Tai identity in Tenasserim. As in Myanmar, the difficulty of life in a stratified, disciplined monarchy forced people to find refuge elsewhere. We don't have specific examples of this happening in the Ayutthaya era, but it appears clearly during the Bangkok period. In 1838 Dr. Helfer wrote of Lenya : "The population consists entirely of Siamese fugitives [refugees, not criminals] who settled in the British territories." At Bokpyin, recent Thai settlers told him of their desire for British protection from the government in Bangkok. At Pakchan, Helfer reported :

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30 Much of this information was learned during motorbike trips along both sides of the border. The sources must remain anonymous for obvious reasons. A useful article on Tai-speakers in the borderlands is : "Ethnic Thai Community Fights to Preserve its Cultural Identity," *The Nation* (Bangkok), 20 June 2019, and similar articles by Khun Pratch Rujivanarom.

> Many of the Siamese slaves brought over by force to the Peninsula to fight against the exasperated Malays had left their standards and considerable numbers were said to be hidden in the adjoining jungles. … they were extremely desirous to come over, and throw themselves under British protection, that a great number of fugitives were hidden hereabouts in the jungles, people driven by force from distant parts to fight against the Malays.[31]

Similar migrations were happening elsewhere in Thailand. As always, debt was a major factor that drove people to escape. In the 1850s John Bowring reported a parallel example in the north :

> [Chiang] Mai has the reputation of being the *refugium peccatorum* ['refuge of sinners'] of the Siamese, especially of persons unable to pay their debts,—a class dealt with very harshly by Siamese law and usage. … To the east of the city, and at only three or four minutes from the fortified space, runs a river, the banks of which are partly covered with houses: unfortunately, they are all inhabited by the bankrupts of Bangkok, who have fled there, changing their names, to shun the pursuit of their creditors.[32]

It is difficult to imagine that the same dynamics did not exist in Tenasserim during previous centuries. Even prior to its annexation by Ayutthaya, it had been a remote province where people could hide from authorities. After 1531, it became one of several outlying provinces

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31 Helfer, J.W. "Report on the Islands…," (1838–40) IOR/F/4/1926/82649, pp. 85, 18, 53–4, respectively. Also see Crawfurd 1830, v.2, pp. 102–4, & the table on p. 122 in which he analyzed conscription as a tax. Crawfurd estimated "corvée" provided 80% of revenue for the Bangkok government, compared 9% from land taxes and 4% from alcohol and gambling. Taxation might be a legitimate means of viewing forced labor if not for its indeterminate nature and the threat of grievous bodily harm, including execution.

32 Bowring 1857. v.2, pp. 7–11. He added: "We passed many criminals in chains, some of which were very light, others very oppressive. The first class were, as we understood, debtors, who become subject to slavery at the demand of their creditors, and who, in consequence, are delivered over to those who will buy their services. It is usual for a creditor to punish his debtor by calling in the power of the nobles, and handing him over to servitude unless his friends release him, though the servitude is often unredeemed for life." (v.2, p. 296).

where rebels and pretenders were able to gather strength and followers before challenging the Thai throne.[33]

However the process played out, it ended in 1760. After that year, huge numbers of Tai-speakers were either driven off by aggression from Myanmar or abducted by armed men from Siam (chapters 23–29 and note 241). Most of those who remained sought the palisaded refuge of Myeik despite its Burmese military governors. These disruptions likely erased the ephemeral threads of the Tai Tanao.[34]

Remarkably, the same guerrilla warfare did not displace the Karen people whose presence in Tenasserim may have predated both Tais and Bamars. It is impossible to say when they first arrived. They kept no records, have vague origin stories, and survived by avoiding the appalling racism of armies, authorities and other unenlightened beings who might have recorded their presence. The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* mentions them just twice, both times times as visionaries who saw mystical images of the Buddha. The 1911 census said: "They preceded the main migration of Shans. Peacefully, quietly, unobtrusively they moved, avoiding all contact with the tribes they passed. … [Karens] followed the line of least resistance, preferring the hardships and obstacles of hills, jungles and uninhabited regions to the dangers of conflict with fellow beings. Their movements have left no impression on the histories of other races."[35]

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33 VOC 1816, f. 1278v; VOC 1845, f. 591r–v; Cushman 2000, pp. 155–8; et al.; Baker & Phongpaichit 2017, pp. 224–7.

34 A number of Shan villages occupy the interior today, particularly around Indaw along the Lesser Tenasserim River, in the upper Theinkun valley, and south from Lenya. These 'Singkhon Tai' speak with a melodic accent that is a pleasure to hear. Their historical origins are uncertain, but at least three possibilities exist: 1) descendants of the old Tai Tanao who returned after British forces pacified the interior, 2) descendants of Thai refugees who fled extremely harsh demands made upon country people by elites during the early Bangkok period (1770–1824), and 3) descendants of Thais from Kuiburi and Bang Saphan who crossed the mountains in search of new lands during the 19th and early 20th century. My plans to interview them were thwarted by the 2021 coup. Fortunately, Thai researchers gathered a great deal of valuable information in 2019. See: *Mueang Boran Journal*, **วารสารเมืองโบราณ**, v.45/4 (2019).

35 *eg*., Butler 1884, p. 6; *Mergui Gazetteer* 1907, v.B, p. 5; *Mergui Gazetteer* 1913, v.B, p. 6; Census Report 1911, v.9, p. 254.

This inconspicuous path was well chosen. In 1825, for example, James Low described how they used Tenasserim as a refuge from Burmese tax collectors: "The Burmans used to force the Karens to fell a certain quantity [of teak] yearly without receiving any wages—an intolerable grievance to escape from which they often retired into the deep recesses of the forests."[36] Remarkably, they also eluded Thai raiders and slavers,[37] and after 1824 routinely escaped British tax collectors too. One frustrated official told his superiors in 1860: "Karens have removed into the depths of the jungles, and to realize the revenue from them has been a work of much time and labour."[38] Combined with resilience, these abilities continue to serve the Karen today. Six decades of violent attacks and persecution by the Tatmadaw have failed to drive them from the mountainous homeland they call 'Kawthoolei'.

Though often inconspicuous, the Karen became the second-largest ethnicity in Tenasserim, according to Low's estimates and British censuses between 1839 and 1911.[39] Like 'Tai', however, the word 'Karen' is not so much an ethnic label as a cultural one.[40] They are diverse and dispersed, with a notable linguistic division between Pwo- and Sagaw-speakers. Some are Christian, some are Buddhist, and many retain indigenous spirituality. Their communities are found from the westernmost islands to central towns to the foothills on the eastern slope of the Thai-Myanmar border.

Likewise, the Moken of the Mergui Archipelago were masters of hiding themselves and their past. Their language is based on Malay, but their origin stories and indigenous spirituality are unique.[41] Trace evidence suggests that they came from Sumatra around 2000 years ago, but this is unconfirmed.[42] Their presence in the islands was not re-

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36 Low, *History of Tenasserim*, chapters 1 & 3.

37 *ibid*., ch. 14. Captain Low said that in addition to their abilities in the forest, the Karen were less oppressed by Thai forces because the invaders came to rely on them to procure food.

38 Hugh Christian Menzies Papers, 1860-1. IOR/MSS/EUR/G66

39 India. *Report on the Medical Topography* … 1844; Butler 1884; Arnold 1907.

40 Lieberman 1978, p. 462-9. Also see: Wilson *1827*, appendix, p. *lix*. Note that some Karen-speakers view the idea of a single Karen identity as derogatory.

41 Temple 1897; White 1922; Hinshiranan 1996; Larish 1999; Ivanoff & Lejard 2001.

42 Larish 1999, pp. 28–9, 45, citing Blust 1994, pp. 32–4, 54.

ported by early European travelers, which some historians extrapolated to mean they were absent until recently. That assumption is erroneous because, 1) European ships mostly avoided the inner channels of the islands, 2) Mokens hid in the forests whenever strangers approached, and 3) Moken names for the islands seem to pre-date all others.

In the past, visitors exploited, robbed and enslaved them. Today, foreign tourists marvel at their intimate knowledge of the sea, their beautiful mythology and crafts, and the way they cling to perilous traditions despite a world that seems determined to stamp them out forever. The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* contains one of the few historical mentions of the Moken prior to British arrival. When Mergui was founded by the Thai in 1531, "*kathae*" people were settled in a waterfront quarter called Kathae Su (chapters 11 & 24). This Burmese term roughly means "of sand", indicating people from the islands. This likely meant Moken, though it could refer to Malays, Tais, Karens and other islanders.

Similar stories can be expected among all groups who came to *Tāṇa-sirī*. These include Malays who are no longer prominent but were integral to its history. The *yazawin* places them in the 8th century kingdom of Kya-ka-lin, while British records show that Malay sailors were common in the archipelago more than a thousand years later. Some came seasonally as robbers and slavers, but many others settled in the region—very far from their traditional homeland, it would seem—for reasons as yet undiscovered.[43]

Likewise, the Mon were present in Tenasserim in early centuries but have since receded from view. Their past is likely buried in the soil, awaiting excavation. People from across India—Tamils, Madrassis, Meitei, Telugus, Gujaratis, Bengalis and more—appear throughout the region's history, but their reasons for crossing the Bay of Bengal are poorly understood prior to the British colonial era, and not well understood even then. Arabs and Persians are also essential to Tenasserim's history, and their sailing directions are some of most valuable evidence we have. Armenians, for whom the entire world became a refuge after

43 Today, 'Pashu' generally refers to ethnic Malays living on Myanmar's southernmost coastline in towns like Sadein, Kampong Mah Puteh and Kampong Tengah. Residents of the latter seem to have linguistic origins in Kedah. One suspects their histories have been retained within community knowledge.

their oppression in central Asia, are known to have been in Mergui due to the bi-lingual tombstone of Anna Paschoela (1740). And people of Chinese descent—Peranakan, Hokkien, Hakka, Yue, Han—have probably been coming since the 2nd century CE. They came as wood cutters, sailors, merchants, miners, gardeners and families seeking a new place to prosper, or at least a refuge from the last place where they did not.

The purpose in listing these ethnicities together is not to diminish them, but to connect them. And to emphasize the fact that all of their stories are hidden, yet not inaccessible. Their history survives on the walls of temples and mosques, in oral traditions, in the soil beneath Myeik, in locally published books, and in archives around the world.

Traders, invaders and persuaders came to Tenasserim for centuries without leaving substantial records. Europeans were some of the last to arrive, but they left better documents, and it is fair to use their accounts to illustrate how other people chose Tenasserim as a refuge. Repeatedly—from 16th century Portuguese *renegados*, 17th century English interlopers and Dutch fugitives, 18th century disgraced French priests, 19th century undesirables of the British Empire, to 20th century misfits like Maurice Collis and Benjamin Jubb—Tenasserim was a place to hide from a world that had no place for them.

The collective legacy of all these groups is a composite identity unique to the region. It is not easily defined by appearance or language, though it is recognized instinctively by residents. Unfortunately, its subtleties remained obscure to those who looked from afar, or were biased by imperialism, racism or nationalism. Stuck in their prejudice, they treated Tenasserim as a mere appendage of larger neighbors. History proves that their view was entirely mistaken.

1531 : THE END OF AUTONOMY

The region's early autonomy must be inferred. If Tun-sun was Tenasserim, it was apparently independent until Funan arrived in the 3rd century. Subsequent vassalage is plausible, though the nature and duration of the relationship were not explained in the *Liang-shu*. There is no suggestion that other Mon-Khmer polities possessed Tenasserim. The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* says Mon nobles founded Kya-ka-lin in 783 CE, but it does not describe a conquest of existing people nor obeisance to

Ramawaddy. If Qāqullah was Kya-ka-lin (note 3), vague reports from Arab sources said it belonged to Java in some way around 900 CE. Monsoons and logistics would have made the relationship very tenuous, however, and no source claims subjugation to Srivijaya or other Malay polities. If 'Talaitakkolam' was Takwa, it was raided by Tamil Cholas in 1025, but nothing indicates occupation or tributary status.

As stated in the previous section (and notes 15, 66, 75, 126 & 163), there is also no real evidence that *Tāṇa-sirī* was controlled by a Myanmar kingdom prior to 1760 CE. Perhaps it was a vassal at times; perhaps not. Either way, the nature of vassalage was nominal and temporary at most. Assertions of conquest are refuted by the near-absence of Tenasserim in Myanmar's early historical materials, and by logistical realities which scholars have strangely ignored. Simply put, invasions of distant, rebellious places were risky, expensive and usually ended in failure. For instance, the *Tanintharyi Yazawin* lists a brief occupation by Bago in the 1360s, but this was soon repulsed. Apparently a wiser course was taken by Toungoo between 1548 and 1581. Both Tabinshweti and Bayinnaung negotiated for the benefit of Tenasserim's customs revenue without the risk and expense of its political control (notes 195–6).

This leaves the Tai. Martaban's chronicles say Tenasserim was repeatedly invaded by Tai-speaking rulers from the 13th to 15th centuries, perhaps beginning with an attack by Wareru in the 1280s.[44] He was said to be loyal to Ramkamhaeng of Sukhothai, though this king clearly placed no claim on the region.[45] Later versions of Ayutthaya's chronicles boasted of Tanao-si among its territories in 1351, yet these

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44 Pyin-nya 1927, *Mottama Yazawin*, pp. 9–13.

45 The errant claim that Tenasserim belonged to Sukhothai appears to have originated with Prince Damrong in "Siamese History prior to the founding of Ayuddhya," J. Crosby, tr., JSS 13/2 (1919), p. 45. He speculated that 'Tanao-si' and other kingdoms occupied a damaged space on Ramkamhaeng's pillar, but this is not possible. The "obliterated" section on line 23 has space for only four or five letters at best. The next legible letter is *no nu* (น), which does not correspond to a final consonant for Tanao-si (ตะนาวศรี), nor Tawai or Toungoo. In JSS 59/2 (1971), Griswold and Nagara wrote of the missing letters: "'Möan .. n' is surely Bann (*Păn*), i.e. Martaban, the capital of the kingdom of Rāmañňadesa in Lower Burma." The flip-side of this identification is that Ramkamhaeng of Sukhothai specifically did *not* state a claim on Tenasserim.

have no corroboration and are contradicted by the claim's absence in the Luang Prasœt version.[46] The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* mentions attacks by 'Yodaya', one of which was briefly successful in the 1370s. The invaders were soon dislodged, however, and further attempts were failures for another 150 years. Importantly, surviving Thai chronicles do not mention Tenasserim at all in this period. And conspicuously, it was not among tributary cities claimed by Trailok (r. 1448–88). Perhaps early Ayutthaya wielded some form of influence across the mountains;[47] but there is no evidence to support the idea, and the region's absence in Thai records raises its own questions.[48]

Instead, a common assertion is that Khmer-language plates found in Tanintharyi township in 1955 prove that the region was under Thai control by the 1460s.[49] Historians were quick to seize on this thin hypothesis to fill a gap in their knowledge, but even a brief review of the evidence renders it untenable. Aside from the uncertain provenance and meaning of the plates, nothing in their texts clearly identifies them with Ayutthaya. I could add a large number of other issues along with more plausible hypotheses.[50] The most intriguing are that the plates

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46 Cushman 2000, pp. 10–11.

47 The two polities could have easily found common ground in ethnicity, royal marriage, mutually beneficial trade, wealth entanglement, security guarantees, and maintenance of the portage as a Buddhist conduit between Ayutthaya and Sri Lanka. A reciprocal relationship like this could have obviated any desire to attempt a risky invasion.

48 We can discount the claim that Thai chronicles show a Thai conquest of Dawei in 1488, when the passage clearly indicates the attack failed (see note 89). The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* says another attack succeeded there ten years later, but this success cannot be magically extended southward. Throughout their respective histories, Dawei was always separate from *Tāṇa-sirī*.

49 Cœdés 1965; Vickery JSS 61/1 (1973). The 1460s assumption proliferated widely, *eg.* Wyatt 1982; Mills 1997; Breazeale 1999; Baker & Phongpaichit 2017, et al.

50 For example, Vickery writes : "Tenasserim at the time, as both Thai chronicles and European travelers state, was a dependency of Ayutthaya..." But in the footnote to this sentence he says: "In fact, there is no European evidence before the beginning of the 16th century, and I am assuming that the situation had been the same throughout the preceding 30-40 years." For support, he cites two weak historians and two travelers who never actually went there, the latter of whom dates to *1*569. Additionally, Cushman's comprehensive [*cont.*]

were conferred by King Tilok of Lanna, or by the autonomous Tai monarch of *Tāṇa-sirī*. In any case, the 1460s date rests on dubious assumptions rather than actual evidence.

Clinging to that canard is like twisting in the wind at the end of a long rope, when instead one could calmly step down to the solid earth of well-known historical events. Primary among these was the Portuguese seizure of Melaka in 1511. This dramatically changed the course of Southeast Asian history, including that of Siam, Burma and Tenasserim. A provisional narrative proceeds as follows:

Ayutthaya had long sought influence in the southern straits of Singapore and Melaka. Historians of Thailand have portrayed these attempts as proof of maritime power, but an unbiased reading of the limited evidence indicates they were just extortion and state piracy. They were never a commitment to establish permanent presence or political dominance. Moreover, the campaigns usually ended in failure if not fiasco. Ayutthaya had no logistical ability to maintain forces at such an enormous distance, against the southerly monsoon, and in defiance of Malays who had been masters of the sea for thousands of years. Further defeats occurred at Melaka in 1456 and 1500, though Thai monarchs claimed that nominal tributes from Malay sultans were equivalent to victory. Hypothetically, these offerings could have actually been bribes financed by *orangkaya* to make the troublesome, unprofitable Thais go away.

The Iberian arrival changed the dynamic entirely. Immediately after 1511, the fanatically Catholic Portuguese established an alliance with non-Muslim Ayutthaya in order to secure food for Malaca, which grew none of its own, and potentially military assistance as well.[51] The list of their common enemies began with Melaka's deposed sultan who had taken 20,000 of his followers to nearby Bintan Island. These included Gujaratis with whom Portugal was locked in a bitter war throughout the Indian Ocean. The alliance flourished initially. Enthusiastic embassies were sent back and forth, including some through

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[*cont.*] translation of Ayutthaya's chronicles does not even mention Tenasserim between 1351 and 1548 CE. A detailed examination of all epigraphic and chronicle evidence for Tenasserim is in progress.

51 Thomaz 1990, 1994 & 2000; Flores 1991, pp. 23–29; Bouchon & Thomaz 1988.

Tenasserim. Notably, the envoys made no mention of Mergui, thus concurring by omission that the place was inconsequential in the 1510s and '20s (see notes 99 & 282).

Soon the alliance stalled, partly because shipments from Siam had to pass hostile Bintan. They could have gone via Tenasserim but this was not done for unexplained reasons.[52] Rice from Bago was also cheaper and more reliable, a fact which likely troubled the Thais. The Europeans then made a series of violent blunders that offended Ramathibodi II. Mismanaged, divided and underpopulated, Malaca entered a critical situation, with food hard to obtain and the deposed sultan lurking a few miles away in a fort on the Muar River.

Then in July 1525, Pêro Mascarenhas became captain-major of Malaca. He was an extraordinarily capable man—a hardened soldier, skilled leader, clever diplomat and dedicated servant to the crown. He repaired the relationship with Siam and calmed tensions with sultanates like Pattani and Kelantan. In September he wrote to King João III to say that he needed a thousand men and three years of preparation to invade Bintan.[53] This was necessary to finish off the sultan and

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52 Weight and bulk were clearly not among those reasons. Using boats, carts, buffaloes and slaves, huge quantities of any product could be transported through Tenasserim. For example, Dutch records show that tons of heavy metals were carried overland, including lead, tin and at least one shipment of 60,000 kilograms of copper [VOC 1119, f. 1216 (1636). VOC 1229, fol. 124r–125r/GM, deel 3, p. 289 (1659 CE). VOC 1409, fol. 1099v–1109r/GM, deel 5, p. 10 (1686). VOC 1573, fol. 70r (GM, deel 3, p. 787)]. In 1686 Constance Phaulkon sent 1,600 chests of copper to Marit with vain hopes of escaping Siam with his fortune (and his head) [VOC 1409, fol. 1099v–1109r (1686; GM, deel 5, p. 10. Also see: VOC 1466, fol. 326r–333r (1691; GM, deel 5, p. 409)]. Meanwhile, Indian merchants used the route to transport textiles in such quantities that the Dutch considered them an existential threat to their operations in Siam [VOC 1111, fol. 104r (1634; GM, deel 1, p. 469); VOC 1279, fol. 288v (1674; GM, deel 3, p. 784); VOC 1523, fol. 116v–118r (1694; GM, deel 5, p. 659); VOC 2177, fol. 3888r–3889r (1732; GM, deel 9, p. 314); et al.]. A huge variety of surface sherds show that even larger loads of ceramics were carried in the other direction for centuries.

53 PT/TT/CC/1/32/106 : "Carta de Pêro de Mascarenhas a D. João III sobre a sua chegada a Malaca … que o seu intento era tomar Bintão para dali virem os mantimentos de que muito necessitava a fortaleza," 1 Sept. 1525.

Gujaratis once and for all, because their enmity had been the prime threat to Portuguese Malaca since its inception.

Mascarenhas did not get his men or three years. In 1527 he was appointed viceroy of India and sailed away to assume the position at Goa. The monsoon had turned, however, and he was forced back to Melaka.[54] Stuck there until the winds changed, he decided to use the opportunity to attack Bintan with just 550 men. The risky operation was a brutal success, as duly reported to João III by Fernão Nunes, a confidant of the king.[55] The settlement was burned to the ground, the sultan neutralized, and the Gujaratis dispersed.

Nunes then advised his king to order the same destruction in the north. He explicitly stated that Tenasserim was an intolerable threat because it was providing safe harbor to Gujaratis at a place called 'Lynguo' (possibly on Katan Island; see note 282). Unstated was the fact that crucial rice shipments from Bago were vulnerable to any enemy in the Mergui Archipelago, especially Gujarati sailors who were just as skilled and ruthless as the Portuguese.

The Nunes letter raises questions which cannot be answered by the 1460s canard: if Ayutthaya controlled Tenasserim in 1527, why would it give safe harbor to the arch-enemies of its powerful new ally? Equally, why would the Thais give refuge to Gujaratis who were primary allies of their own foe, the deposed sultan? Instead, wouldn't Ramathibodi II have cultivated the relationship with Portugal to obtain weapons and military assistance against their common enemies, and more importantly against the rising threat of Myanmar which indeed defeated Siam twenty years later? Why would the Thai king risk driving the Portuguese further towards Bago, with whom the unpredictable Europeans already had a vital relationship? And if Ayutthaya commanded

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54 PT/CC/TT/1/38/71

55 PT/TT/CC/1/37/81 : "Carta de Bacharel [*sic*. Belchior?] Fernando Nunes para D. João III dando-lhe conhecimento que Pêro Mascarenhas, com 550 homens tinha tomado e destruído Bintão, cujo rei fugira e que era necessário fazer o mesmo a Tenaçerim, por ser refúgio das naus de Cambaia," 7 Sept. 1527. Also in Thomaz 1964, pp. 201–5; and translated by Danvers in IOR/1/3/142. Also see: PT/TT/CC/1/38/48 & PT/TT/CC/1/41/144 for subsequent confirmation of the successful assault on Bintan.

Tenasserim, why would Fernão Nunes call for a risky assault against it like the one at Bintan, without even suggesting diplomacy?

Surviving documents are silent on the point. Mascarenhas sailed away without initiating an attack on 'Lynguo'. The *Décadas* describe corsairs who received license from the *Estado* to raid 'Moor' shipping in the archipelago, but no assault on *Mueang* Tenasserim itself ever occurred. The corsairs appear to have failed even in that limited task, while local government retained firm control.[56] And yet further shipments from Bago were unmolested, and the Gujarati-Tenasserim issue disappeared from Portuguese records. These events raise more questions : why did the attack never occur if the destruction of Bintan had been so successful? How did the Gujarati problem go away?

Answers might be found in the abilities of Mascarenhas and the timing of correspondence. Later documents show that he was a gifted strategist who accepted hard realities and ramifications.[57] He surely understood that Ayutthaya considered Tenasserim its dominion in name if not in fact, and that any attack would damage the alliance at a time when Portuguese Malaca was in peril. There were instructive precedents for this risk: when *capitão* Jorge de Brito burned down Kedah in 1518, his successor had to send a half-shipload of goods to Ramathibodi II in apology.[58] Five years later Jorge de Albuquerque sent a fleet against Muslim shipping at Pattani which was even more in the orbit of Siam.[59] Mascarenhas put an end to those adventures.

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56 Barros, *Da Ásia*, Década 3, livro 8, capitulo 2, pp. 254–9, & D.3, l.10, c.6, p. 496. Also see: Cuoto, *Da Ásia*, D.7, l.10, c.3, p. 453. And importantly, see: PT/TT/CC/1/22/80, "Carta de Jorge de Cabral [capitão-mór de Malaca] para o Rei sobre a viagem que fez à Ilhas Maldivas tomada de uns navios no porto de Nagapattinam e no porto de Choromandel; Notícias dos successos da Índia. Malaca, 10 September 1537." In this letter, Cabral relates a "disaster" at the barre of "Longuu" (a port in Tenasserim) in May 1527. Ships sent to harass Muslim vessels were instead outwitted and burned.

57 See: PT/TT/CC/1/32/106, in which Mascarenhas explains his grand strategy of war and diplomacy that would secure Malaca for Portugal. He then became governor of India, and was soon given what was arguably the most difficult task in the empire—rescuing Portugal from its quagmire in North Africa.

58 Flores 1991, p. 33, citing "Carta a el-Rei D. Manuel I atribuída a Afonso Lopes da Costa," 15 Aug. 1518, *Gavetas* v.5, p. 478.

59 Flores 1991, 39–43.

Further offense was also unnecessary, because Ayutthaya obviously wanted a west coast port after their failures in the southern straits. Therefore, the wise course for both sides was to align their interests and end the autonomy of *Tāṇa-sirī*, with an understanding that the Gujaratis would be expelled too.

It was a formidable task. Preparation and diplomacy would take time, as would obtaining approval from João III. The Nunes letter was sent in September 1527. It could not not have arrived in Europe before the middle of 1528, and a response was unlikely to return to Malaca before late 1529. With more time for deliberations in both Lisbon and Siam, this makes the 1531 date for Thai occupation of Tenasserim very intriguing. Additionally, it corresponds with other events such as the decline of Ayutthaya's long difficulties in Lanna after the death of Mueangkaeo in 1526,[60] and the ascension of Borommarachathirat IV in 1529. It also solves the mystery of why 'Mergui' never appears in Portuguese sources prior to 1544.[61]

There is no smoking gun in this narrative. Instead it represents an accumulation of evidence for one date against the evaporation of evidence for another. Fortunately, if one demands greater certainties there is an easy alternative : simply ask the people of Tenasserim about their own history instead of conjuring it from the spotty records of neighbors. The 1531 invasion is described in plain, factual detail by chapter 11 of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. As William Mulholland told my thirsty homies: "There it is. Take it!"

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60 Wyatt 1982, p. 81. No historian has ever explained how Ayutthaya could have risked an invasion of Tenasserim while simultaneously defending itself against aggressive kings of Lanna like Tilokkarat (r. 1441–87).

61 The first appearance of Mergui (as 'Mergym') in Portuguese records seems to be in: "Apontamentos que foram enviados a el-Rei a respeito da chegada à India de Manuel Afonso de Sousa," (c. 1544, *Gavetas* v.3, pp. 218–34). The *Décadas* only mention the name once, in Barros, D.3, l.2, c.5, first published in 1563. Researchers should also be careful not to confuse these places with 'Mergeu' and 'Tenazar' in India, as some historians have mistakenly done.

Editorial Notes

1. Grammar is often implied in Burmese. Tenses, indefinite articles and other grammatical tools have therefore been added to the direct translation. These judgments are unavoidable, but they run the risk of trampling subtleties.

2. Some text has been clarified with additional paragraph breaks.

3. When U Gyi Sein compiled this book from various parabaiks, it did not form a continuous narrative. Therefore, a few chapters have been altered to restore continuity and chronology. Specifically :

   – Chapters 4 and 5 (the tale of Parama Raja) were previously chopped into several parts and interrupted by chapters 6 and 7 (the stories of the phayas).

   – Places listed in chapter 11, "The Establishment of Myeik", were roughly tossed together despite their obvious geographical basis. By moving a few sentences, order has been restored without changing the wording.

   – The present chapter 18 (Buddha statues submerge in the river) has stories from the British era. Previously, it was the initial paragraph of chapter 17 (Buddha Sasana during the Shan Dynasty).

   – Chapter 30 ('appointment of Pe-taungza as Myeik Myowun') was moved to restore the chronological order of Myeik *myowuns*. It was also combined with the chapter that succeeded it, in which Pe-taungza's previous position as a religious officer in Myeik was described. The change is actually minimal, while the resulting cohesion is substantial.

4. Geographic names are a particular challenge in Tanintharyi. A single site can have numerous labels across time, languages and mediums. This has caused so much confusion that some places can no longer be located. Where possible, the present text conforms to a single spelling based on modern maps and local dialects. For example, 'Pa-htaw' usually appears on maps as

'Pataw', and thus the latter is used. Likewise, the 'Jetavana' of India and Upper Burma has become 'Zedawun' in Tanintharyi.

Unfortunately, limiting confusion can also limit the accuracy of transliteration. The terminal syllable လယ် : 'lay' is especially problematic. For instance, တောနောက်လယ် : 'Taw Nauk Lel' is usually spelled 'Tawnaukle' on maps, though it is pronounced "tao-nah-lay" (and said so rapidly that it almost sounds like a single syllable). After one visitor pronounced it "toe-KNOCK-ul", we tried to add clarity by spelling it 'Tawnauklae'. However, other names have retained the '-el' on most maps, as in Lel Taung, while some have become '-ei', as in Mei Ngaw. This attempt to balance text, maps and local pronunciation is obviously not ideal, but it is better than the chaos of surrender or the dullness of standardization.

5. With considerable reluctance, the generic word 'Shan' has not been refined by context and the valuable opinions of people in Myeik, Tanintharyi, Bokpyin, Banlaw, Theinkun, Yadarnapone and other places visited by the editor. These residents—many of them ethnic Bamars—took pains to make me understand how the region's Shans (or 'Tai Tanao') were distinct from those in Thailand, Lanna and the Shan Plateau of Myanmar. This was true from their migration into the area (perhaps in the 11th century), through their annexation by Ayutthaya, and probably until their dispersal after 1760. Unfortunately the fact was not expressly made by U Gyi Sein, who was from Mon State rather than Tanintharyi. Therefore, this vital distinction remains in footnotes to which I hope the reader pays close attention. Please see the introduction for further discussion.

6. In contrast, several dates were such obvious errors that nobody disputes them. Chief among these are mistakes for the foundings of Aung Thawara and Myeik (*ie*., 513 instead of 483 ME, and 1093 instead of 893 ME, respectively). Foreign scholars have insisted that these errors should remain in the text with corrections relegated to footnotes. Their opinion is wrong for several reasons, the most important of which is that the *Tanintharyi Yazawin* does not belong to them. It belongs to the people of the region for

whom it is a living history. Quite the opposite of a forgotten text, it has been continually read and studied since it was written. In fact, the text was originally a community collaboration for which U Gyi Sein was given chief credit. His errors were noted at the time but never documented because nobody expected to have to explain them to foreigners who never bothered to visit the place. Fortunately, the knowledge was passed down to each generation.

This process of community collaboration continues today. After careful review, local experts have agreed on the correct dates which are now placed within brackets [ ] in the main text. These changes were further confirmed by the research of Myanmar scholars Maung Maung Shwe (1990), Khin Maung Oo (1974), and Maung Lay Tint (2015).

The errors have been consigned to the footnotes, though not to the flames.

7. None of these decisions were arbitrary, yet some required speculation. U Gyi Sein faced the same problem in the 1920s when he transformed palm-leaf and parabaik manuscripts into a readable book. He asked forgiveness for any mistakes, a request that is humbly repeated by the modern editor.

8. If forgiveness is not forthcoming, disgruntled readers are welcome to obtain their own translation. To this end, I have uploaded the documents to Archive.org. A facsimile copy is available at:

https://archive.org/details/u-gyi-sein-myeik-yazawin-c.-1929).

A typescript is available at:

https://archive.org/details/ugs-tni-yazawin-tyepscript.

J.P. 2023

Glossary

AYOEDAYA : Ayutthaya. The city and kingdom are conflated in the Burmese text. They are also given various names such as Yoe Da Ya, Yudia, Ayokeda, etc. For clarity, all these have been changed to 'Ayoedaya' in the present text.

CHAUNG : ချောင်း : often translated as 'creek', in practice this word can mean anything from a small stream to a huge river. It has been left mostly untranslated.

HPON : ဘုန်း : literally, 'glory', but more broadly meaning personal or social power derived from merit gained during past lives. However, *hpon* is a unique Myanmar concept that is difficult to fully describe.

HTI-DAW : ထီးတော် : the gilded or bronze ornamental umbrella atop a Myanmar *zedi*.

KYAUNG : ကျောင်း : school or monastery; the latter more formally *hpongyikyaung* : ဘုန်းကြီးကျောင်း : or 'monk school'.

MYOWUN : မြို့ဝန် : literally 'city minister'; it usually accords with 'mayor'.

NAGĂ : နဂါး : a dragon, more specifically a river dragon.

PAE SAR : ပေစာ : a manuscript of inscribed palm leaves.

PARABAIK : ပုရပိုက် : a type of palm-fiber paper. Pronounced 'parapit' in Myanmar.

PHAYA : ဘုရား : often translated as 'pagoda', in Myanmar it can mean a number of things other than a Buddhist structure, including images or statues of the Buddha. Therefore, the word has been transliterated but not translated.

PHAYA PWE-DAW : ဘုရားပွဲတော် : pagoda fair.

RAJA : ရာဇ : pronounced 'yaza' in Burmese, which often denotes a king. However, when referring to Tai royalty, *yaza* has been changed to the more generic 'raja', which is closer to the Thai pronunciation (*racha* : ราชา). The Burmese pronunciation has been retained when referring to Myanmar kings and non-royalty (*eg.* Khema Yaza, yazawin, etc.).

SANGHA : သံဃာ : the order of Buddhist monks.

SHAN : ရှမ်း : Tai person or people. Whether that means Tai-speakers native to Tenasserim, the Chao Phraya basin or elsewhere must be determined by context.

SHAN DYNASTY : ရှမ်းမင်းဆက် : prior to 1531 CE, this refers to local Tai-speaking rulers. After 1531, it simply means 'rule from Ayutthaya' regardless of the identity or lineage of the Thai monarch at the time. The same concept applies to other variations such as 'Shan era'.

SAYADAW : ဆရာတော် : an honorific title for Buddhist monks in Myanmar, and often the leading monk of a monastery.

TAUNG : တောင် : in practice, this can refer to anything from a rock to a mountain. The present text usually leaves it untranslated. At times, however, an English term has been used according to convention and historical documents (*eg.* Pataw Mountain, Khe Hill). Note also that the homonym *taung* is a unit of measurement equal to one cubit.

WEIKZA : ဝိဇ္ဇာ : a unique kind of Myanmar mystic who uses his powers for Buddhist purposes; from the Pali *vijja*, meaning wisdom.

YAZAWIN : ရာဇဝင် : chronicle, or literally, 'a history of kings'.

ZEDI : စေတီ : a stupa consecrated with a *hti-daw*.

Tanintharyi Yazawin

BY

U Gyi Sein

First Book

1

King Kya-Mine of Yaw Na Ka

and the building of cities by his descendants

In Myanmar Era 85, a king named Kya-Mine reigned over Kya-Mine city in Thagara State of Yaw Na Ka region.[1] The king fathered twenty sons, as the queen of the southern palace who was chief queen, as well as the queen of the northern palace, each gave birth to ten sons. After they grew up, they requested permission from their father and mothers to seek new places where they could build new towns and cities. When their parents granted their request, they built a town in Kaw-Bein. The town was named Ramapura or Ramawaddy and ruled by the eldest brother.[2] His chief queen gave birth to ten sons.

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1 Kya-Mine Dynasty is later identified as a Shan lineage (p. 17), though the initial date (723 ce) seems too early for that to be true. More likely these were Mon or even Pyu people, though most scholars agree that ethnic lines were not drawn as sharply in early centuries as they are today.

Thagara State : a polity which flourished near Dawei from the 8th to 11th centuries (Moore & Than Swe 2006).

Yaw Na Ka : contrary to internet speculation, this is identified later in the chronicle as an archaic name for Tanintharyi (pp. 26 & 111). In particular, it refers to the far north of the region, east of the Salween River. However, some local scholars believe U Gyi Sein inserted this connection to his native Mon territory, and thus consider it dubious.

2 Kaw-Bein, Ramapura and Ramawaddy : likely Kawt Bein on the Attaran River, 25 km east of Mawlamyine. A guide from Mon State advises that Ramapura and Ramawaddy were archaic names for the area [tak]. In the 10th century, Ramawaddy was confirmed as Mon country by Mas'ūdī in his *Kitâb mur Udj adz-dzahab wa ma'âdin al-djawhar* (943 ce; Ferrand 1913 pt. 1, p. 106).

These princes decided to search for new lands in order to build their own kingdom. They prepared ships, vessels and boats and left their palace. The sea deities helped them and caused their flotilla to sail towards the south. They arrived at an island where they found land as flat as the surface of a drum. After consulting each other, they established a city there in 145 ME. The eldest brother, Naungdawgyi, ruled the city which was named Kya-ka-lin.[3]

The ten brothers took the throne in order of seniority. To the east of Kya-ka-lin there were dense forests with abundant *champak*[4] and fragrant woods, as well as creeks and ravines rich in tin, gold, silver, gems and jewels. Small and large islands north of the city were rich in pearls. Shan Pashu[5] people made their living there as pearl divers. With their

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3 KYA-KA-LIN : on Kanmaw Island which has uncommonly flat lands [YWN]. 145 ME is 783 CE, an intriguing date for the princes' departure. Gabriel Ferrand wrote : "The first dynasty of kings of Pegu extends only until 781 of our era when the reign of King Tissa or Titha ended. From this time until the conquest of Pegu by Anvarahta, that is to say for about 269 years, no event is mentioned in the Talaing annals (Phayre, *History of Burma*, pp. 18, 31). This blank page in the history of the Talaing is the consequence of the recent invasion of the country by the emigrants from the Coromandel Coast who founded the second dynasty of the kings of Pégou whose capital was in Kadâram [Prome]." (Ferrand 1913, p. 448) [JP]. This narrative fits the local understanding of Mons as Khmers with strong Indian influence, if not integration [NS].

Kya-ka-lin also raises another intriguing possibility: that it might have been the 9th century site of Qāqullah (or Jājullah). Numerous Arab geographers said this fortified trading city was built on a coastal promontory and exported high-quality agarwood and ambergris. It also traded in silk, perhaps as a re-export from China that was brought overland from the east coast of the peninsula. The Arab texts can be dubious and inconsistent, but repeated details and sailing directions suggest this same identification. See: Wheatley 1961, pp. 224–8; & Tibbets 1979, pp. 30, 54, 60, 64, 89, 98, 128–35.

4 CHAMPAK : *Magnolia champaca*. a tree prized for its timber and fragrant flowers.

5 SHAN PASHU PEOPLE : translated as written (ရှမ်းပသျှိး လူမျိး). "Pashu" (ပသျှိး) means ethnic Malays living in what is now southern Myanmar. They have a distinct dialect that seems to originate in Kedah. It is not entirely clear if Sein meant them separately or as a mixed race with the Tai. Most likely it was the former, with an implied conjunction (*ie*., 'Shan *and* Malay') [NS]. Note also that Episodes 10–12 of the chronicles of Nakhon Si Thammarat suggest a [*cont*.]

invented equipment, they dove for pearls in the sea and sold them to rich people. The rich people traded the pearls in various cities and countries, and also presented some pearls to the king of Kya-ka-lin. The dynasty lasted for 145 years—a period in which ten kings ruled the city of Kya-ka-lin.

2

ESTABLISHMENT OF HTAUK-KWA BY THE YOUNGEST KING, BYA MUDRI

King Bya Mudri, the youngest of the ten brothers, succeeded to the throne after his nine elder brothers. Two years into his reign, he had an idea that the country would be able to sustain its prosperity if crops were abundant and there were many rich people, merchants and farmers. So, he consulted with his ministers and sages about establishing a new city to the east of Kya-ka-lin. In 263 ME, he led his royal army, ministers and sages in search of prime land, and they arrived at a forest of fragrant trees.[6]

[*cont*.] close relationship between Thais and Malays in founding polities along both coasts of the Malay Peninsula from Phetchaburi southwards. Unfortunately these episodes have no mention of Tenasserim (Wyatt 1975, pp. 102–110).

6 FOREST OF FRAGRANT TREES : နံ့သာတောသို့ : indicating aromatic woods that were harvested for export. The most important early species was not sandalwood (*Santalum* spp.) but *Aquilaria* spp., especially *A. malaccensis*, known as lignum aloes, agarwood, gharu wood, etc. Once used in spiritual rituals and displays of wealth across the globe, this high-value product may have been Tenasserim's most important commodity during the first millennium.

Crucially, the term for aromatic wood in several Indian languages is 'takkola' (*eg.* Sanskrit: तक्कोला; Telugu: తక్కోలం [B. Garimella, pers. comm.]; it even appears in the *Ramayana* (book 3, sarga 35, line 22). As the name of a port on the Malay Peninsula, 'Takkola' is found in Indian texts like the Milindapañha (VI-359) and Niddesa (part 7). It also seems very close to Ptolemy's 'Tacola' (Τάκωλα) from the 2nd century. And intriguingly, the Chinese [*cont*.]

When the king and his entourage entered the forest, the mountain guardian *nat*[7] posed as a great rhinoceros and appeared before them. They chased after it, and when they reached level ground suitable for establishing a city, the rhino gradually disappeared. Then the ministers and sages consulted and said, "The *devas*, knowing the plan of our lord, pretended to be a great rhino and led us here." So, they advised the king that the site was appropriate for a new royal capital. The king was overjoyed by the words of his wise men, and in 263 ME he had a city built there which he ruled as king. The city was

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[*cont*.] word for agarwood—沉香—is pronounced 'tchien-xiang' in Chinese and 'tum-haang' in Cantonese. These have a phonetic resemblance to 頓遜—'Tien-shiun' or 'Tun-sun'—a 3rd century kingdom which came to Chinese attention through 5th century Chinese envoys in Funan (*Liang-shu* 54, Pelliot 1903, pp. 263–8; & Wheatley 1961, p. 114); it is reasonable to question whether the name of the product was also the place of its export.

For a long time these and other references were conflated with Takuapa (ตะกั่วป่า; Wales 1937; Luce & Shin 1969; Wyatt 1975; Manguin 2004, et al.). That idea should be abandoned. For one, *takua* : ตะกั่ว is Thai for lead or tin, yet there is no evidence that Tai people built cities on that distant coast in the 12th century, nor the 9th century when Takuapa flourished. References to Takkola also pre-date the Tai arrival by a thousand years. Most importantly, *takkola* corresponds much better with 'Tākwā', which is how the local name 'Htauk-kwa' (ထောက်ကွာ) still sounds to visitors. The timing of the terms do not fully align, yet there are common threads that wind through the centuries. An important link is found in Arab sailing directions. These describe the *Juzur al-Tākwā* (Mergui Archipelago), *Tākwā Bari* (the Strait of Takwa, a vital inner passage of the archipelago) and the mainland site itself which is clearly and repeatedly identified by its latitude (ibn Mājid c. 1462 & 1490; al-Mahrī 1511. Also please see the map in Appendix 7 of this book.). Arab navigators may have learned the name from Tamil sailors when they entered the Bay of Bengal in the second half of the first millennium (Tibbetts 1979, pp 214–219, 240).

Collectively, these threads suggest that Tenasserim's early commerce in aromatic wood was extensive, lucrative, enduring and global. For a comprehensive article on the historical use of agarwood around the world, see: López-Sampson & Page 2018.

7 MOUNTAIN GUARDIAN NAT : တောင်စောင့်နတ် : *taung saung nat*. Along with forest guardian nats, these spirits are popular in rural areas. They are thought to guide people away from environmental destruction.

named Htauk-kwa because the rhinoceros had slowly faded away into the distance.[8] Later this changed into Htauk-kwe, its current name.

The city of Htauk-kwa had a great abundance of agarwood, *champak*, *ka-la-mak* and other fragrant timber, as well as lead and jewels.[9] Wealthy merchants of Shravasti, Rajgir, Kapilavastu and Kosambi came across the sea from India aboard sailing ships. They purchased precious goods like aromatic woods and gems including pearls, then took them back west to India.[10] They brought all kinds of clothes and textiles from India, and fine clothing from Greece, Roma[11]

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8 Htauk-kwa founding : 263 ME / 901 CE. The city's name translates as 'receding until unseen' without specific reference to a rhinoceros [TKK]. Its location has been confirmed but remains unpublished pending excavation [JP, YWN].

9 Agarwood, champak : see notes 4 & 6.

Ka-la-mak : ကရမက်, likely *Mansonia gagei* Drummond, known colloquially as 'bastard sandal-wood'; see note 140.

Lead : ခဲ : probably meaning tin which is abundant in the region. However, some lead is mined there as well, especially in Dawei district.

10 Shravasti, Ragjir, Kapilavastu and Kosambi : city-states in northern India that figured prominently in the life of Gautama Buddha (Rooney 2017, pp. 81, 84). Their mention here in connection with maritime commerce, as merchants played an essential role in the rise and spread of Buddhism across Asia (Ray 1994, pp. 123 et seq.; Wheatley 1961, p. 189; Hall 1985, p. 39; Alpers 2014, p. 38).

11 Roma : ဧရာဝ : along with Greece, this likely meant Byzantium to Southeast Asians. For example, Mehmet Özay makes a strong case that Constantinople (Νέα Ῥώμη : 'New Roma') assumed the mantle of Rome in Malay texts (Özay 2020). This seems to be true in Kedah's 19th century chronicle, *Marong Mahawangsa* : "The Sultan of Rum gave a large bŭhtera, or ship, to his chief, Márong Máháwángsá, for the accomodation of the Prince, and another for himself and his people, for the voyage to China." En route, they battled a huge *garuda* off the Tenasserim Coast at "Táwái" and "Kuala Mrit" [the latter word is Thai name for Myeik/Mergui] (Low 1849, pp. 5–6; Sturrock 1916).

Note that transcriptions of the *Marong Mahawangsa* often have 'Parit' instead of Marit, which led others to translate the word as 'ditch' (or *Kota Parit* : City of Ditches / moated city). This seems to be a mistake. In many alphabets based on Brahmic script, the 'm' and 'p' are similar. For example, in old Javanese the difference between ꦩ (ma) and ꦥ (pa) is two small dashes. In Thai: ม/ป. In Mon and Burmese: ဓ/ဝ. Because 'marit' is not a Malay [*cont.*]

and Kaw-Tong-Payit.[12] These wealthy merchants built mansions in the city and engaged in great commerce. The still-famous Kosambi Building in Htauk-kwe was also built by rich merchants from India. Located near the mouth of Pa Wa Chaung, the building is now a property house,[13] and is still called the Kosambi Building. The dynasty spanned 250 years in which forty-nine kings ruled Htauk-kwa, starting with King Bya Mudri.[14] [15]

[*cont.*] word, someone likely overlooked those marks as a mistake and exchanged them for a recognizable term. Our choice today is either to perpetuate the error for the purpose of pedantry, or else boldly correct it before rising temperatures and sea levels make the matter irrelevant.

12 Kaw-Tong-Payit : according to elders of Tanintharyi, this is China [ywn]. It does not quite fit the geography of the list, but perhaps represents re-exports from an overland route, like the silk hypothesis for Qāqullah in note 3.

13 Kosambi property house : the phrase could also be translated as 'treasure house', meaning a kind of bank for people to keep their valuables. Traditionally, people in Myanmar hid their wealth by secretly burying it in the ground. Today only scattered bricks remain at the site. Note that it is unclear if U Gyi Sein meant that the structure was extant in 1929, or if he was transcribing a much older text *verbatim*. [jp/tkk/ywn].

14 The dynasty spanned 250 years : Sein later says the city of Htauk-kwa lasted 220 years, meaning its last king lived for another thirty years after moving away.

15 Notably, no mention is made of Bagan or Anawrahta. Legends and academic assumptions claimed that he seized Tanintharyi in 1057 ce, but these seem based on imperial bias and a failure to study the region. Later they were falsely 'confirmed' by a single votive tablet of dubious meaning and very suspicious provenance. Even the few inscriptions from later in the Bagan era do not say anything about administration. They may have only been religious gestures or, in the case of boundary claims, idle royal boasting. They are not supported by any material evidence, and the extensive corpus of Myanmar chronicles barely mentions Tanintharyi. Most of all, no scholar has attempted to show how the conquest and occupation of such a distant, rebellious place were logistically possible, especially considering its annual isolation during the monsoon. At some point, all these conspicuous absences must be considered evidence of absence itself. Please see the introduction for more plausible explanations for Myanmar's enduring cultural presence in Tanintharyi.

3

ESTABLISHMENT OF AUNG THAWARA BY KING BYA SAKKAN PEIK

In [483] ME,[16] the forty-ninth monarch, King Bya Sakkan Peik, was not happy with his old capital and left his palace to search for a site to build a new city. He arrived at the mouth of a tributary to the river which today we call the Greater Tanintharyi. Upon a nearby plain, he longed for his ancestors and therefore paid homage toward the direction of Htauk-kwa. Therefore, the place was and still is called Ka-taw-kan.[17]

The king and his entourage then crossed the tributary river and found a vast plain where they rested. As the royal cooks were preparing lunch for the king, the cooking pot broke and they could not get another one immediately. After learning this, King Bya Sakkan Peik ordered that the place be called 'Mut Htong', meaning 'no pots'. In the Shan language *mot* means none and *tong* means pot, so it could be called '*oh-ma-shi-taw-ne-ya*' in Burmese.[18] People came and settled there, and as time passed Mut Htong became Maw Tong in the Burmese language.[19] Today, it is a big village with vast fields of rice and

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16 [483] MYANMAR ERA (1121 CE) : Sein's text has 513 ME (1151 CE) for the departure from Htauk-kwa, but subsequent paragraphs render that date impossible. They state that Bya Sakkan Peik only founded Aung Thawara in 514 ME after spending decades building Ban Shaung, Maw Sunn Gyi, and the new capital itself. The errant date is also directly contradicted by chapter 44 which says the king left Htauk-kwa in 483 ME. The 30-year error may have arisen by conflating the duration of Htauk-kwa city (220 years) with that of its dynasty (250 years). Please see the introduction for further notes on errant dates, including the opinions of local scholars such as Maung Lay Tint and Khin Maung Oo.

17 KA-TAW-KAN : a site on the Greater Tenasserim River near Mawton, GPS 12.13, 98.93 [YWN]. The phrase means 'to pay homage riverbank' in Burmese [TKK].

18 OH-MA-SHI-TAW-NE-YA : အိုးမရှိသောနေရာ, 'the place without a pot'.

19 MAW TONG : *hmot* (หมด) in Thai means depletion, though it comes after the noun. Pot, however, is *mohr* (หม้อ), and *mohr-tong* (หม้อทอง) would mean 'pot of gold'. For the moment, this idea is only a guess because military action prevented the editor from querying Tai-speakers in the area. Instead of a hard conclusion, it is meant to demonstrate how terms in Tanintharyi can [*cont.*]

crops. In the middle of the village there is a *taung* called Za-lon, which was named after a treasure house on the mountain with plenty of gold and silverware, as well as pots, plates, trays and bowls. Today, it is still called Za-lon Taung.[20]

In 484 ME, King Bya Sakkan Peik built a new city named Ban Shaung some two miles northeast of Mut Htong.[21] He only reigned there for one year, then handed it over to his sons. The walled and moated city still exists today and is known as old Ban Shaung city.

The king then sailed upstream and built a new city in 488 ME at Maw Sunn Gyi, upstream of today's Sa-tein and Ma Ma sandbanks and Banlaw and Theindaw villages.[22] His sons who had been left behind did not stay long in Ban Shaung, but came and joined him.

One year after establishing the city of Maw Sunn Gyi, Bya Sakkan Peik befriended Nagă Min Gyi, the dragon king who lived upstream. This ruler said Maw Sunn Gyi was not a prime site for a royal city to flourish in perpetuity, but if Padamya village near Ahtet Phaya Htwet were established as the royal capital, the king would be powerful and able to enjoy longevity, and would have a long dynasty.[23]

[*cont.*] share different meanings among ethnic groups without causing conflict. The town is usually called Mawton or Mawtone on modern maps in English, such as "Mergui" (U.S. Army Map Service, 1962).

20 ZA-LON TAUNG : *za-lon* is bowl in Burmese [TKK]. Located at GPS 12.113, 98.95

21 BAN SHAUNG FOUNDING : 484 ME / 1122 CE. The remains of its walls and moat are visible in satellite photos and on the ground; GPS 12.125, 98.956.

Regarding the name, *ban* in local usage indicates a secondary or satellite town [YWN]. The place is also called Ban Shao, which could have come from a Tai phrase such as บ้านเจ้า : *baan-jao* : 'Lord's Town'; or บ้านเช้า : *baan-chao* : 'Morning village'; or something else depending on pronunciation. Also, due to implications of the Parama Raja story below (see chapter 4 & note 32) we should consider Lao variations such as บ้ามเจ้า : *ban chao* or บ้ามเช้า : *ban xhao*. This mish-mash of languages may seem doubtful and thus damaging to the credibility of the chronicle. In fact, it still occurs daily in the province. Because Tanintharyi absorbed a wide variety of cultures, terms are shared effortlessly across languages without claims of ownership by any of them. This is particularly true for religious, political and geographical terms.

22 MAW SUNN GYI FOUNDING : 488 ME / 1126 CE. The location is unclear. Presumably it was not too far upriver from Theindaw, which today is at GPS 12.3, 99.133

23 PADAMYA VILLAGE : up the Greater Tenasserim River at GPS 12.29, 99.06

Together with his dragon counterpart, King Bya Sakkan Peik went to see the site for the new city. The dragon king offered to provide him assistance if he were to build a new city there, but asked him not to bring his queens and concubines to the site because women tend to have unreasonable fears. The king promised not to bring his queen. Then Nagă Min Gyi led thousands of dragons together with the humans to build stone city walls and moats.[24]

Many citizens and courtiers talked about how pleasant and joyful it was to build the new city up at Padamya village. The chief queen, after hearing them say so repeatedly, requested that Bya Sakkan Peik bring her to the building site. At first the king refused. But after numerous requests he promised to bring her there because he adored her.

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24 Dragons : the *nagă* is constantly present in the culture and spirituality of Tenasserim. Separating its mythology from history may be impossible. Nonetheless, several scholars suggest that stories like this could be allegories for contact between 'primitive' and 'modern' societies. For example, Georges Cœdès describes an origin legend from Pallava India that was re-cast in Funan. In this story, the foreign brahmin Kaundinya married Somā, a princess of the indigenous *nagăs*, then used the connection to found a 'civilized' kingdom (Cœdès 1970, p. 37). Cœdès also writes that "… without great exaggeration, that the people of Farther India were still in the midst of late Neolithic civilization when the Brahmano-Buddhist culture of India came into contact with them." (*ibid*., pp. 7–8; but note that this interpretation is strongly disputed by Michael Vickery, 2003). If so, this interaction was probably more complex than the mythology admits, because earlier societies were hardly 'uncivilized' (Castillo 2013, p. 31; Manguin 2004). For example, Bérénice Bellina and Praon Silapanth cite excavations in Khao Sam Kaeo that show extensive regional trade networks which may date to the Neolithic period (Bellina 2017, pp. 19–23).

Drawing from linguistic research, Leonard Andaya writes: "… sometime between 2000 and 1500 bce, the Neolithic agricultural community of Austroasiatic speakers had moved down from central Thailand to inhabit the Peninsula as far south as Selangor." (Andaya 2002, p. 27). An unidentified people certainly inhabited the Tenasserim and Lenya watersheds prior to the arrival of Mon, Bamar, Thai and other ethnicities. However, our knowledge of them is extremely limited due to a lack of excavation. There is little evidence besides stone ax-heads now held in the museum of Theindawgyi Phaya in Myeik, the British Museum (#1928, 1114.1-11), and in private collections. For discussion of similar pieces found at Khao Sam Kaeo, please see: Tessa Boer-mah, "Stone Adzes Corpus", in: Bellina 2017, pp. 489–497.

The king had a glass case built on the royal barge for fear that his queen would be frightened when she saw tens of thousands of dragons. He then put her inside the glass case and took her to the construction site. When the queen saw dragons taking big and small stones out of the river and building stone walls, she cried out in fear. Nagă Min Gyi heard her cry and was furious that Bya Sakkan Peik had broken his promise and brought the queen. The dragon king attempted to kill him by casting an angry glance at him.[25] However, the king was too powerful to be killed, and he stabbed the dragon to death with his golden war fork.[26] This was followed by a state of chaos among the dragons who fled into the sea and forests.

In 514 ME, King Bya Sakkan Peik was enthroned in the new city, which he named 'Aung Thawara' because he had conquered the dragons.[27] After one year on the throne, the king developed a mental illness due to his unconscious regret over killing his benefactor, the dragon king. The demented monarch asked his sages why he was suffering from mental breakdown. The sages replied that he was feeling so because he had killed Nagă Min Gyi, who had helped him.

The king then asked how his condition could be cured. The sages replied that his mental problems would heal if paper mâché sculptures of the dragon king were installed on royal boats and barges. King Bya Sakkan Peik was gratified to hear their advice and had his royal boats modified with paper mâché dragon heads and tails. He also arranged

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25 ANGRY GLANCE : In traditional Myanmar folklore, dragons have the power to kill human beings by casting a sideways glance. When looked at in such a way, humans immediately burn to death [TKK].

26 WAR FORK : a weapon resembling a 'tiger fork', which had barbless prongs attached to a long pole. These were essential tools in a country with many tigers and no firearms. Apparently they worked on dragons as well [TKK/JP].

27 AUNG THAWARA FOUNDING : 514 ME / 1152 CE. The name translates as 'win peacefulness' and does not directly mention dragons [TKK]. The location remains unknown, and Sein's text gives conflicting information. In the present paragraph it is near Padamya, but is later said to be over a hundred kilometers further north. See Appendix 5 for further details. In either case, it is well upriver and off the trade route. At the time, conflict between Bagan, Angkor and Srivijaya may have driven small peninsular kingdoms into retreat (see: Cœdès 1970, chapter 10).

dragon boat racing. Only then did he recover from his mental illness and put his mind at ease. Ever since, dragon boat races have been held annually in all districts across Tanintharyi.

Meanwhile, the lifeless body of Nagă Min Gyi drifted down towards the sea and arrived near a mountain which in the past was called Nagă Kap Taung.[28] Today the mountain is named Nawa Htet Taung. Then the dead body drifted further down and got into a gravel pit at the foot of the hill called Wut Sin. In the past, the pit was called Nagă Hmaw.[29] Finally, the body reached the shore of a small village, which was then named Khayin Thay because the dragon king had been killed with a war fork.[30] The village was later called Tayin Thay, and is today's Tanintharyi.[31]

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28 Nagă Kap Taung : *nagă* means dragon and *kap* means to approach or come close [TKK]. The hill is 25 meters high, located on the opposite bank and just upstream from Tanintharyi township at GPS 12.096, 99.025. At some point in history, residents sculpted the hill into nine terraces, then surfaced it with thousands of laterite blocks. Each household was required to contribute a certain quota of material for this massive endeavor [YWN & interview with U Tin Wuin, November 2018].

29 Nagă Hmaw : *hmaw* means pit or mine [TKK]. It was located in the southeastern corner of Tanintharyi town near GPS 12.087, 99.015

30 Khayin Thay village : *khayin* means fork and *thay* means dead [TKK].

31 Name origin of Tanintharyi : the tale is clever, but the name derives from *Tāṇa-sirī*, a Pali/Sanskrit phrase that translates as 'prosperous refuge' or 'resplendent land'. This word blossomed into dozens of variations : Tanah-seri (Malay), Tanao-si/ตะนาวศรี (Thai), Tanintharyi/တနင်္သာရီ (Burmese), Tanassuli (Chinese), Tenassery (early European), etc. Tenasserim is likely a Portuguese variant. For an extensive list, see: Anderson 1890-a, pp. 11–12. All of these are simply different sounds that cultures use to utter a single name. Even the Burmese version is 'Te-na-ser-i' when spelled rather than spoken. Therefore, all names are equally valid, and acrimony over them can end.

4

The Ogress sends Prince Parama Raja to Pula Yeikkha Country[32]

King Bya Sakkan Peik, the ruler of Aung Thawara, had five beautiful queens. Among them, the most charming and elegant was actually the daughter of the ogre king, the ruler of Pula Yeikkha country.[33] This ogress had used her occult powers to take out the eyes of the four human queens. She put the eyes in a case together with her fangs, and kept the case in her homeland. Then, in her guise as a human queen, the ogress ate every male infant born to the four other queens.

Soon, the youngest of the blind human queens got pregnant from King Bya Sakkan Peik. When she was around six months along, she asked the king to allow her to give birth outside the palace. He agreed to her request, and the young queen dressed herself up as a poor woman and traveled to a place far from the royal city. She took good care of her pregnancy and delivered a healthy boy at her full-term.

She went back to the palace only when her son was around six months old. The young prince was blessed with superhuman abilities due to the meritorious deeds he had performed in his past lives, and therefore the ogress could not eat him. The prince was destined to become a powerful and mighty ruler because he possessed kingly characteristics and attributes. He had two names—Parama Raja and Maha Dhamma Raja. Every day, the ogress looked for chances to eat the young prince; yet by the age of seven, the destiny of the young prince had become as bright as the morning sun.

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32 Parama Raja : this is Tenasserim's version of the 'Twelve Sisters' story, or *Nang Sip Song* (**นางสิบสอง**), with the prince's name corresponding to 'Phra Rama' (พระราม/**พระราม**). Though widespread across Southeast Asia, it is strongly identified with Tai-speakers, especially those from Laos. It was told in the *Paññāsa Jātakas*, but this version seems drawn more from the folktale than the Buddhist narrative. Please see: "The Twelve Sisters in the Buddhist Tale, *Paññāsajātaka* in Thailand," by Chanwit Tudkeao (Yamamoto 2020).

33 Pula Yeikkha Country : the ogre-land is said to be Palaw, which is very unfair to the friendly Palawans. Their town is 100 kilometers north of Myeik [ns, ywn].

Despite her growing fear of him, the ogress did not give up her plan to kill the young prince because she knew she would never be able to lead a peaceful life with him. Then she came up with an idea of sending him to Ogre-country to let the other ogres eat him. She used her feminine wiles on the king and said she would like to go back to visit her parents, as it had been many years since she left her native land. The king refused to let her return home because—in her guise as a human queen—she was too beautiful to lose. The ogress said she would die if she could not go see how her parents were doing. Finally, the king was persuaded into sending his son, the prince, to go in her place. The ogress was pleased that her scheme had worked. The king then ordered his seven-year-old son to go to the country of his co-mother.

The ogress asked Prince Parama Raja to tell her parents that she was in good health. She also asked him to convey a letter to them, which she wrote on a gold parchment. She carefully rolled up the golden letter and placed it around his neck. Pretending that she loved him, the ogress kissed and hugged the prince as she bid him farewell. The young prince paid respects to his parents and left the palace with the bravery of a lion king who comes out of a golden cave. He went to the royal stable and chose a fine horse to saddle, then set off on his journey to Pula Yeikkha country, the home of his co-mother.

He and his horse were worn out upon arrival at the deep forest where Myeik lies today. He tied the horse to a tree on a hill and slept there. To the west of the forest and across a river, there was a *taung* called Pataw. A *weikza*[34] lived atop this mountain, and another *weikza* lived on a hill nearby. In the past, Pataw Taung was called Pyin Taung, or 'Change Mountain'.[35] This was because previously the weikza and the mountain spirit had been laying stones to build a plinth for a Buddha

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34 Weikza : a Myanmar mystic who uses supernatural powers for Buddhist ends.

35 Pyin Taung : gps 12.456, 98.577 ; *pyin* is 'change' in Burmese [tkk]. Now called Pataw-Patit, the island is across the harbor from Myeik. Previously it was called Madramacan or (Badrmacan), a multi-denominational saint of the sea. The shrine for 'Shin Macan' still exists on the northern shore of the island and is actively propitiated. For a well-informed discussion of this fascinating entity around the Bay of Bengal, see: J.G.R. Forlong 1895. Photo at end of this book.

image, but the site was discovered by common people before it was finished. So they changed to another place where they built a stupa with a Buddha image. Today, an unfinished plinth still lies some forty-six meters northeast of the stupa and Buddha image built by the weikza and the mountain spirit. The place is called Shwe Tu Taung Phaya by some people today.

The weikza who lived on Pataw Mountain came over to the hill where Parama Raja was sleeping. He saw the gold parchment written by the ogress and read it while the prince was deep in sleep. The letter read, "Eat the young boy who brings the letter." Then the weikza examined the prominent features of the young prince and recognized his tremendous potential to become a great and powerful ruler. He replaced the letter with another gold parchment on which he wrote a different message, and hung this around the boy's neck.

After he woke, the young prince continued his journey without learning that the gold parchment had been swapped. When he arrived at the Kingdom of Pula Yeikkha, he presented the golden document along with gold and silver flowers[36] from the ogress to the ogre king, who was very pleased to hear that his daughter was in fine fettle. The new letter asked the king to give the young prince the case that contained the four pairs of eyes and another case that had the canine teeth of the ogress. Unaware of the weikza's intervention, the ruler of the ogres gave these to Parama Raja.

The young prince visited the city of Pula Yeikkha, then went back to his country. He slept on the same hill during his return journey, and the same weikza woke him up to tell him that the eyes in one of the cases belonged to his mother and three co-mothers. The weikza then presented him with a philosopher's stone and said, "Put those eyeballs back into their sockets and rub them with this philosopher's stone. Then the queens will regain their vision." Showing him the pointy teeth from the other case, the weikza explained that his co-mother who had asked him to go to Pula Yeikkha was in fact an ogress who posed as a beautiful woman, and that she had tried to kill him. When the prince

36 Gold and silver flowers : likely meaning and ornamental *bunga mas* ('flower of gold'), a traditional tribute item in Southeast Asia.

asked how she had planned to do so, the weikza showed him the original gold parchment that the ogress had given him.

The young prince said that in Pula Yeikkha city he had not seen any ogres, only humans. The weikza replied that when ogre guards saw him coming, they quickly reported him to their king who ordered the whole city to disguise themselves as humans. Then Parama Raja asked why the ogress had blinded his mother and three co-mothers. The weikza said it was because the ogress wanted to eat every son borne by them. He explained in detail how his mother left the palace when she was around six months pregnant, gave birth to him at a remote village, and then returned to the palace only when he was about six months old.

After realizing the truth, Parama Raja was so grateful that he paid obeisance to the weikza several times. The young prince accompanied the weikza back to the mountain where he lived and begged to be accepted as his disciple. He asked the weikza to help him for the rest of his life, then went back to his country.

The *taung* where the prince tied up his horse during his journeys to and from Pula Yeikkha country was called Khe Hill. *Khe* is an obsolete word for *chi*, or 'to tie up', but it is still used in some villages.[37]

On Pataw Mountain, the weikza built a stupa that was seven *taung* and two *maik* tall, including the plinth.[38] Ancient people called it a stupa because it had no *hti-daw*.[39] Only a stupa with this golden umbrella is called a *zedi*. The mountain was thus called 'Pa-Htoe' due to its stupa at the summit. With the passage of time it became Pataw.[40]

A similar case happened at a village near Kya-ka-lin city. The village called Ouk Pho Maw was renamed as Kan Maw after princes from Kya-Mine built a lake for swimming there in 148 ME.[41]

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37 KHE HILL : *khe* means 'to tie up' in the Myeik dialect, where it is pronounced 'chay' [PHY]. The hill is at GPS 12.439, 98.597

38 SEVEN TAUNG AND TWO MAIK : about 3.5 meters [TKK/JP].

39 HTI-DAW : an ornamental umbrella, often gilded or bronze, that sits atop a *zedi*.

40 PA-HTOE : a Burmese word for stupa or religious structure [TKK].

41 OUK PHO MAW : modern maps and the 1839 journals of Dr. Johann Helfer have 'Ok-phó' at GPS 11.68, 98.68, about 16 kilometers east of Kanmaw Island. It is unclear if Sein meant this place or Kanmaw itself [JP]. *Kan* means lake in Burmese [TKK]; 148 ME is 786 CE.

The name Myeik is derived from *ma yeik*, a Shan word for horse-hitching post. *Ma* means horse and *yeik* means hitching-post in the Shan language. As time passed, this became Myeik in Burmese.[42] In [893] ME, a king of the Shans built a port city there, calling it Ma Yeik Island. Thirteen governors appointed by Shan kings ruled the island for [228] years.[43] In 1121 ME, U Aung Zeya occupied Ma Yeik Island, ending Shan rule there.[44]

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42 THE HORSE STORY is unlikely. Tai-speakers spelled the name Marit (**มะริด**) or even Mrit (**มริด**), not Mareik. The short vowel of the first syllable makes it entirely different from **ม้า** (*mah* : horse) and in fact not a word at all. Likewise, the vowel of the second syllable **ริด** (*rit*) makes it distinct from **รัด** (*rut*), which means 'to bind or tie'. After 1760, imagination, dialects and legends may have combined to form the rather clumsy name Myeik, because the Burmese word for horse is မြင်း : *myin*. See note 282 for further discussion.

'Marit' might derive from an older local term that is now forgotten. This would explain why the sailing directions of ibn Mājid and al-Mahrī called the area "the estuary of Markhī" before the town existed (c. 1500 & 1511 CE, respectively; BnF Ms. Arabe 2292, 2559). These appear to be the earliest known references to the name by someone who was actually there.

43 [893 ME / SHANS / 228 YEARS] : here, 'Shans' means Thais from Ayutthaya, or 'Ayoedaya Shan'. Sein's original text has their arrival as 1093 ME (1731 CE) and thus Thai hegemony calculated as only 28 years. However, among local scholars in Tanintharyi the 1093 date is considered an obvious mistake. Apart from numerous sources which show Thai rule dated to the 16th century, Marit's founding and demise are laid out in detail in chapters 12 and 21 of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. These state conclusively that the town was founded in 893 ME (1531 CE) and conquered by Alaungpaya in 1759 CE, for a Thai rule of 228 years. The dates are further confirmed by the chronology of Portuguese sources (see introduction, pp. xix–xxvi) and the writings of local scholars like Khin Maung Oo (1974) and Maung Lay Tint (2015). One possible cause of the error is confusion between '8' and '10' in Burmese (၈ / ၁၀) if the latter were compressed in rough writing on irregular palm leaves. Another could be conflation of two important *sayadaws* named U Zagara. The first was present at the town's founding in 893. The second oversaw construction of Laykyunsimi Zedi, the town's most important Buddhist site, in 1093 ME according to Tawkyaung *sayadaw* U Paduma (2021, p. 7). Also see notes 119 & 268.

44 U AUNG ZEYA AND THE END OF SHAN RULE : meaning that in 1759–60 CE, Alaungpaya of Ava conquered the region and ended its rule from Ayutthaya. His military campaign began in that year, though Marit and Tanao-si were not taken until February of 1760 (Than Tun 1985, part 3, pp. 69–75).

5

Prince Parama Raja returns home from his co-mother's country

When Prince Parama Raja he arrived back in his father's royal palace, he told his mother and three co-mothers what the weikza had told him. The four queens regained their vision when the prince put their eyeballs back into their orbits and rubbed them with the philosopher's stone. The prince then gave the case with the canine teeth to the ogress who was masquerading as a beautiful woman. Once she held the case, her original appearance emerged as an ogress with two canine teeth. She was executed by the king.

Prince Parama Raja inherited the throne of Aung Thawara from his father, who died at the age of ninety after ruling the country for forty-five years. During his reign, Parama Raja marched into Pula Yeikkha country. Tens of thousands of ogres were killed in the invasion and the survivors fled to Bilu Island in Mon State.[45] Humans occupied Pula Yeikkha after the ogres fled, and the name of the country became Palaw over time. King Parama Raja built a temporary palace there and stayed for a short period.

Beginning with Bya Sakkan Peik, five kings ruled the city of Aung Thawara for 117 years. It ended when a Shan king, the lineal descendant of the princes from Kya-Mine, died in 630 ME.[46]

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45 Bilu Island : a large island just west of Mawlamyine. *Bilu* means 'ogre' in Burmese [TKK]. Hypothetically, this story could be an allegory for conflict with indigenous people who remained in the region [JP].

46 Shan king, the lineal descendant of the princes from Kya-Mine : this suggests the late 8th century kingdom on Kanmaw Island was founded by Tai-speaking people, which again is probably too early for their presence in the region. Possibly, the initial dynastic origin was Mon, Pyu or even Malay, followed by gradual integration of Tais who arrived later.

6

REASONS BEHIND THE NAMES
Phaya Htwat, Phaya Htan and Phaya Kaing

Near Aung Thawara city, there were two villages called Phaya Htwat and Phaya Htan.[47] This is the story of their names.

Two-hundred and thirty-seven years after the *parinirvana* of Gautama Buddha, King Devanampiyathissa of Ceylon realized that despite the flourishing of *Buddha Sasana* in certain areas, people there had never seen Buddha Gautama. Therefore, the religious devotion they gave to him might be shallow.[48] With this in mind, the Ceylonese king wished to commission images of the Buddha and asked Arhat Mahendra, who was a son of Emperor Ashoka, if he would have them built. He further requested that these devotional items be sent to Myanmar where the *Sasana* was flourishing. Arhat Mahendra accepted the requests and assigned Arhat Upatissa of Ceylon to send the Buddha images. Then, King Devanampiyathissa went back to his royal palace to sleep.[49]

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47 Near Aung Thawara city : the Burmese text indicates these *phayas* were upriver from Tanintharyi, but residents across the region say they were near Myeik (see below for locations). Coastal sites also accord much better with the story. The text may have meant "within the Kingdom of Aung Thawara".

48 King Devanampiyathissa : ruler of Sri Lanka between 307–267 bce. His capital was at Anuradhapura. According to the island's chronicles, he was converted to Buddhism by the son of King Ashoka of the Mauryan Empire [tkk/jp]. Note that U Gyi Sein used 'me' with the year 237 (875 ce). This error is easily resolved by using the Buddhist Era (be) calendar which began in 544 bce rather than the Myanmar calendar which began in 638 ce. That is to say, the event occurred in 237 be (307 bce) rather than 237 me (875 ce). Use of the Buddhist Era in this case is supported by U Maung Maung Shwe in his *Commemorative Golden Jubilee Myeik History* (c. 1990), p. 5.

Parinirvana : the attainment of Nirvana after death.

Buddha Sasana : the teaching and practice of Buddhism.

49 Arhat Mahendra : the son of Emperor Ashoka, spelled 'Mahinda' in Pali. An *arhat* is an enlightened person who has achieved Nirvana [tkk/jp].

As the king was talking about his plan to have Buddha images built, the Emerald Rug of Thagyamin in Trāyastriṃśa became rigid.[50] Thagyamin looked down into the abode of humans and knew that King Devanampiyathissa desired images that resembled the living Buddha. Thus he created four Buddha statues from sandalwood. Each was one *taung* and twelve *let-thit* high.[51] He enshrined seven pieces of Buddha relics inside each one, and placed the four Buddha images on the throne of the king of Ceylon.

King Devanampiyathissa was overjoyed to see the Buddha images the next morning, so he invited many *arhats* and monks to the palace and made substantial donations. The king had the four statues consecrated with reverent ceremonies and also organized religious festivals for fifteen days.

Ashin Mahendra then gave the four Buddha statues to Ashin Upatissa.[52] The monk placed one on a teak log, the second on a stone wheel, and two others on logs from a *ta-khian* tree.[53] He set them adrift into the sea from Zabukawlaha Jetty, saying, "May these images arrive in Myanmar where the *Sasana* is flourishing."

The Buddha image set adrift on the teak log arrived in Rakhine State. The image set adrift on a stone wheel arrived in Kyaikhto of Mon State.[54] The third image set adrift on a ta-khian tree log arrived in Kyaikkhami in Mon State.[55] The fourth image, also set adrift on a ta-khian log, arrived near Zay-kami-tazin village, which today is Phaya

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50 Emerald Rug of Thagyamin in Trāyastriṃśa : Thagyamin is Indra, King of the Devas, while Trāyastriṃśa is the celestial abode of the gods. According to Buddhist stories and Jataka tales, the Emerald Rug is incredibly soft, but whenever important things happen in the abode of the humans—for example, when a pious son who supports his elderly parents is in danger—the rug becomes hard and rigid. [TKK].

51 One taung and twelve let-thit : roughly 68 centimeters.

52 Ashin : a respectful title for Theravada Buddhist monks and superiors.

53 Ta-khian tree : *Hopea odorata*, a tall dipterocarp sought for resins and timber. Usually called *thingan* in Myanmar. Note that 'ta-khian' comes from the Tai name : ตะเคียน.

54 Kyaikhto of Mon State : today's Kyaik Paw Law Phaya, in the area which the British labeled Amherst [TKK].

55 Kyaikkhami in Mon State : today's Kyaikkhami Yele Phaya [TKK].

Htwat village in Tanintharyi township. Local villagers tried to bring this Buddha statue to shore, but it floated away with the tide. Since then, the village has been called Phaya Htwat.[56]

The Buddha image then floated along the water and arrived near the place called Phaya Htan today. Having seen the glittering statue sitting on the ta-khian log, people from nearby villages rowed there and tried using ropes to pull it to shore. But the ropes broke, causing a great commotion among the exhausted villagers. When one of them asked if the Buddha image had been pulled towards shore, another replied that the image had withdrawn. Based on his sullen reply, the place became known as Phaya Htan village.[57]

Then the image of the Buddha floated away again, followed by a villager in a boat. He held it briefly but lost control of the statue at a creek. Therefore, that place today is called Phaya Kaing village and the creek is called Phaya Kaing *chaung*.[58]

The statue again floated away, then entered Mottama *chaung* in Dawei. It arrived at a place which today is called Nyaung Sin village. With much piety, the villagers pulled the Buddha image toward the shore. Previously in Ceylon, Ashin Upatissa had sowed the seed of a Bodhi tree in the ta-khian log. This had grown during the journey across the sea, and now the Bodhi tree got entangled with branches

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56 Phaya Htwat village : in Burmese, *htwat* means 'to leave or get out' [TKK]. The location is marked 'Payatwet' on U.S. Army map "Mergui" (1962), near GPS 12.295, 98.71. The Mimu map, "Kyunsu Township" (2016) has 'Yae Htwat Taung' across the river, and the village tract name is 'Zay Ka Mi' in accordance with Sein's text. [JP]

57 Phaya Htan : *htan* : ထန် means 'sullen'. Presently, the only known Phaya Htan lies far up a tributary of the Lenya River. However, this is only a small structure that does not seem to possess any pre-modern history. Elsewhere in the text, U Gyi Sein mentions a place with the same name far up the Greater Tenasserim River near 13° north latitude. This would agree with his assertion that it was near Aung Thawara, yet even for a religious legend such a site stretches the bounds of geography. Instead, the most likely place could be the monastery on Htan-taung, a hill near the ancient port town of Tawnauklae at GPS 12.342, 98.678. This would fit the context of the story and also be in accordance with local belief that all *phayas* from the tale were near Myeik.

58 Phaya Kaing : *kaing* means 'to hold' in Burmese [TKK]. It is located in Myeik at GPS 12.435, 98.606

from other trees. Some of its branches fell off and dropped to the ground. The place was therefore called Nyaung Sin village.[59] Despite the passage of time, it is still called Nyaung Sinn.

The image left that place, however, and finally arrived at its permanent shrine which today is Shin Mote-hti Phaya.[60]

7

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SHIN MOTE-HTI PHAYA

Another history of this phaya is slightly different.

In Ceylon, the four Buddha images levitated while emanating auras of brown, gold, red and white hues with somber and coruscating illumination. As the king and his citizens offered meals, robes and other religious necessities to the statues and 15,025 monks, the *arhats* went to Zabukawlaha jetty. There, Arhat Maha Arahan said, "As the fact that five Lord Buddhas have emerged in this world is the truth, may these Buddha images go to countries, towns and villages where the *Sasana* will be sustained for the next 5,000 years!" Soon after they paid homage to them, the images sailed swiftly across the sea in the year 938 ME.

The first image arrived in Yaw Na Ka, the second arrived in Thandwe, the third arrived in Bilin, and the fourth arrived in Dawei in 932.[61] Letkya Pyanchi Maung Hmone, the chief of Devi Kindat village in Thagara city,[62]

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59 NYAUNG SIN VILLAGE : in Burmese, *nyaung* means Bodhi tree (*Ficus religiosa*), and *sin* means to drop [TKK]. It is south of Dawei at GPS 13.98, 98.233

60 SHIN MOTE-HTI PHAYA : usually spelled 'Mokti' in English. GPS 14.011, 98.226

61 YAW NA KA : an archaic name for the northern part of Tenasserim, now in Mon State; see note 1.

THANDWE : the city in Rakhine formerly called Sandoway.

BILIN : a town 40 kilometers north of Thaton in Mon State.

THE YEARS 938 AND 932 are shown as written in Sein's text.

62 THAGARA : this kingdom north of Dawei existed from the 8th to 11th centuries (Moore 2011-a; Moore & Than Swe 2006). Note, however, that Sein's date of 938 ME equates to 1576 CE. By then, the urban center had shifted to Dawei amid a turbulent struggle for control between Toungoo, Ayutthaya and local [*cont.*]

led over a hundred people with dozens of large and small boats to pull in the fourth Buddha image that had been set adrift from Ceylon. Their efforts were futile. This was reported in Thagara city to King Bala Deva Saw Yang Naing, the son of King Nandiya Min Shin Zan.[63] The king led monks, ministers and brahmins along with hundreds of thousands of people and tens of thousands of boats to pull the Buddha image to shore. For three days, they attempted in vain to retrieve the offering from Ceylon.

The Buddha image, as it continued to float along in the sea, arrived near the headland of the village of Thay Ta Ywa Kon Tan. There, a nun named May Athy Man Mwe had a dream in which she was told to twist seven threads into one and tie it to the ta-khian log, then supplicate to the statue to go to the place where it wished to be enshrined, and once there to allow itself to be pulled in during high tide on the full moon day of Tabaung.[64] After she spoke of this dream, offerings were made to the *devas* while meals, water, lights and flowers were offered to the image. Then, seven holy persons pulled in the Buddha image as the nun had been told in her dream. It came along and stopped at the place where it is enshrined today in Shin Mote-hti Phaya.[65]

[*cont*.] people. The name Thagara may have continued its association with the area long after the demise of the kingdom itself.

63 King Bala Deva Saw Yang Naing and King Nandiya Min Shin Zan : according to Than Swe, these men reigned in Thagara during the 14th or 15th century (Moore 2011-a, p. 32).

64 Tabaung : the 12th month of the Myanmar calendar, ending in Thingyan, the Myanmar New Year.

65 A somewhat different story comes from Shin Mokti itself. In 1923, a chief clerk named Maung Pe Hlwe from the Tavoy district translated a palm-leaf document which said the Mokti Buddha image was "carved out of the southern branch of the Bodhi tree under which the Buddha attained omniscience." This image and two others floated down the Ganges on planks of *thingan* wood (*Hopea* spp.), each with a marble slab and a small banyan tree. One reached Rakhine, another went to Amherst near Mawlamyine, and the third to Dawei (Maung Ba Thin 1923, pp. 163–4).

8

RELOCATION OF THE PALACE FROM AUNG THAWARA CITY, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF TAYIN THAY CITY IN KHAYIN THAY

The last Shan king of Aung Thawara died in 630 ME. There was no male heir to the throne, and only a princess was left. So, the ministers, sages and brahmins consulted and decided to travel to Thagara city of Aruza Region to ask its king for a royal person to rule their city.[66] The king of Thagara asked the second of his three sons to go to Aung Thawara and take the throne. The prince did so, and married the princess of Aung Thawara.

Several months into his reign, the new king decided to build a new royal capital in Khayin Thay. However, its construction could not be completed because the site was repeatedly destroyed by water. The

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66 KING OF THAGARA : the city's ruler at the time is identified in the final chapter of Sein's book as King Linzin (note 304). According to research by Than Swe and Elizabeth Moore, he would have belonged to the Htaung-kwe dynasty that reigned from 590 to 752 ME / 1228–1390 CE (Moore 2011-a, p. 32; Than Swe 2005). The name thus suggests a connection to the old kingdom of Htauk-kwe (also Htaung-kwa, or Takwa) on the Tanintharyi River. Additionally, 'Linzin' seems to be a Burmese pronunciation of the Lao phrase, ล้านช้าง : *Lan Xang* or 'million elephants', which hints at connections to the Lao kingdom of that name, or to Lanna. Tenasserim has a number of similar threads that trace faintly towards Tai-speakers living north of the Chao Phraya basin.

ARUZA REGION : apparently meaning the Dawei district, though the name is unknown to Dawei locals. It likely appears in the *Glass Palace Chronicle* as a claimed boundary of Bagan under Anawrahta : "the south-east corner the country of the Gywans, also known as Arawsa." Note that Sein's spelling of this word could also be read as Aruja or Arujaya, which half-correspond to a second reference in *Glass Palace* about Bagan's boundaries under Alaungsithu : "south-eastward the country of the Gywans, also called Ayoja" (Tin & Luce 1923, pp. 99, 106). The 'Gywans' have not been adequately identified. Luce thought they were Khmers, but one wonders if the term meant Karens, who are essential to Myanmar's history yet barely mentioned by it. Citing Nigel Brailey, for example, Victor Lieberman suggests 'Gwei-Karens' may have played a pivotal role in Lower Burma's revolt against Ava in 1740 (Lieberman 1978, p. 468; Brailey 1970; Luce 1922; also see: Enriquez 1923).

king asked his court why this was happening. His ministers, sages and brahmins replied that the time was not yet ripe, and that the new city could only be established after two years.

In 635 ME, construction at Khayin Thay began again.[67] Work on the new city was still hindered by serious flooding, so the sages went around town to listen to *da-baung*.[68] They arrived at Sinphyu Gate where four or five children were playing and singing a song :

Aung Par Lay kyauk sadei ma
teine amee thar lay may lay
thay so ah na pay deh
kan chaw loh pyay

The city will only flourish when
Aung is sacrificed at the stone;
death will give power again
and floods will be dry as a bone.[69]

The sages interpreted these utterances and reported to the king. Soon, the authorities made a list of people in the city whose names included "Aung". The king then ordered a team of courtiers to go around town to announce that people whose names included Aung should not reply when their names were called at midnight; and that those who did reply would be sacrificed for construction of the new city.

There was a broker who lived near Ayoedaya Gate.[70] Some eight years before, he had married off his only pretty daughter, Ma Aung Tha, to a rich man. She had given birth to a son who was now seven years

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67 UNSUCCESSFUL SECOND CONSTRUCTION OF THAYIN CITY : 635 ME / 1273 CE

68 DA-BAUNG : random utterances or sayings among the populace. In ancient Myanmar, popular sayings and odd utterances of children, actors and mad people were interpreted as prophecies [TKK].

69 AUNG PAR LAY ... : 'Aung' in a name indicates Sunday-born. This English translation has taken poetic license, though 'bone' is the only word that cannot be found in the Burmese original : အောင်ပါလေ ကျောက်စတေးမှ / တိုင်းအမည်သာလိမ့်မယ်လေး / သေဆိုအာဏာပေးတယ် / ခမ်းချောက်လို့ပြေး.

70 AYOEDAYA GATE : most of Tanintharyi's old gates (တံခါး : *tanhkar*) have been identified except for several along the riverbank. Presumably, Ayoedaya Gate (အယ့ဒွယတံခါး) was one of these, perhaps near the ancient wharf that is [*cont.*]

old. And yet, since the day she had heard about the royal court's plan to sacrifice a human being, Ma Aung Tha was filled with wild joy and began to beautify herself. Every day she applied *thanaka*, then fixed her hair neatly and let it fall loosely over her shoulder.[71] She also wore a red-colored lace headband and an upside-down flower.[72]

Ma Aung Tha also began answering someone even when nobody spoke to her. She told her husband, parents and family members that a woman kept calling her name. They could not stop her from answering the voice, so they locked her in a room. She said that on the day when the names including 'Aung' were called, two women would come for her. Her husband, parents, parents-in-law and other relatives kept guard over Ma Aung Tha and tried in vain to stop her from answering.

At midnight, the mayor, prison warden and executioners went around town and called out names that included 'Aung'. When they arrived at Ayoedaya Gate, they called out the name 'Ma Aung Tha' three times. Exhilarated, Ma Aung Tha replied and ran out of her house. No one was able to stop her. She ran to the mayor and asked him repeatedly to sacrifice her. The mayor and his group took her to the stone post and showed her the hole that had been dug. Wildly, she jumped down into the hole and asked the mayor to put the stone post into the hole. With deep sorrow, the mayor, prison warden, executioners and many members of the public set the stone post down on top of her.

[*cont.*] still visible today. In turn, a major guard and customs post for Ayutthaya was at Bang Tanaosi, which Chris Baker locates at : "Six kilometres south down the Bangkok (now Chaophraya) River beside Wat Phrot Sat, now called Ban Khanon Luang, referred to by European visitors as the Tabanque" (Baker 2014, p. 189). Not to be outdone, Bayinnaung ordered his own 'Tanintharyi Gate' (တနင်္သာရီတံခါး) for the northwest corner of his fortified capital at Bago (Pamaree 2005, p. 95; Harvey 1925, p. 171; Thaw Zin Latt, personal comm. 2021).

71 THANAKA : a yellow powder made from the bark of certain trees. In Myanmar it is used as a cosmetic and fragrance, and to cool, condition and protect the skin from the sun.

72 UPSIDE-DOWN FLOWER : meaning that a woman is not available for courting. [SJV]

Ma Aung Tha can be seen even today, because her blood is still visible on the stone post up to four fingers' width above the ground. Tayin Thay city was later known in history as Tanintharyi town.[73]

It took three years for King Eekadeh Raja to build Tanintharyi city. Construction was previously hindered by floods, and the city could only be established permanently 639 ME after Shin Ma's sacrifice at the stone post.[74] In Dawei, Ye and Mawlamyine towns, the king removed mayors appointed by the Myanmar monarch and appointed Shan ministers to their positions.[75] The name Yaw Na Ka was abandoned, and lands east of the Thanlwin River were called Tanintharyi as of 639 ME.

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73 TALE OF MA AUNG THA : there are a number of similar stories from the region. In particular, Tai culture had a long tradition of *lak muang*, or city pillars beneath which lay human beings chosen for sacrifice. B.J. Terwiel writes that this practice likely originated before Tais began migrating southwards from China, and found examples in Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi, Trat, Chiang Mai, Luang Prabang and among the Tai Dahm of Vietnam (Terwiel 1974). More graphically, Jeremias van Vliet wrote an extensive account of the cruel sacrifices of women by Prasat Thong, the monarch of Ayutthaya in the 1630s. At one point, the king ordered 68 pregnant women to be thrown under the 17 gates of the court, though he was later bargained down to four unfortunates. "The people, who are very superstitious," van Vliet wrote, "believe that these women after dying turn into terrible monsters or devils, who defend not only the post below which they are thrown but the whole house against misfortune." (Vliet 1910, pp. 17–20, 34). Myanmar kings were also noted for these sickening sexist rituals which historians too often ignore in favor of doubtful stories of glory.

FOUR FINGERS' WIDTH : that is to say, the post is said to be stained with Shin Ma's blood 7–8 centimeters above the surface. This part of the post is painted red but usually shrouded in cloth and offerings. It is located within a shrine at GPS 12.0894, 99.0108. Importantly in Tanintharyi, and perhaps in contrast to other places, Shin Ma is still deeply revered as a guardian who sacrificed herself for the good of others, not as a monster driven to a horrible fate by injustice.

74 TANINTHARYI CITY FOUNDING : 639 ME / 1277 CE.

75 MYANMAR MONARCH : presumably this meant Narathihapate, the unlucky and unloved last king of Bagan (r. 1256–87). His impressive regnal name was Śrī Tribhuvanādityapavara Dhammarāja, but he was better known as 'The King who Fled from the Mongols', or even *Min Khwe-chi* : 'Prince Dog-turd' (*Hmannan* 2003, v.1, p. 337). His reign suffered from administrative failures, financial impotence, treachery from his own sons, and rebellions in Martaban and Rakhine in 1258–60 (U Kala, *Maha Yazawin*, v.1, pp. 238–240). [*cont.*]

9

THE BUDDHA'S PREDICTION

As the Lord Buddha traveled from place to place together with his disciples in order to preach, he arrived in Dwayawaddy and Kosambi from where he saw people living on Tanintharyi Island.[76] He then went to Tanintharyi Island alone. When his disciples asked him why he went by himself, the Buddha predicted that Tanintharyi would become a royal capital after the fall of Kosambi.

The prediction was fulfilled, and Tanintharyi Island became a kingdom after Kosambi's collapse.

During the reign of King Bahi Ka the elder, he went into battle with the city of Bago.[77] The king lost the battle and fled to Kedah. His

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[*cont.*] The final blow began with a Mongol invasion in 1277, the same year that Tāṇa-sirī was founded.

It seems very unlikely that Tenasserim was under Bagan's oversight at all during this period (if ever). This chapter indicates that most of the region was independent, as Dawei, Aung Thawara and Tāṇa-sirī were choosing their own rulers from Tai lineages. Additionally, the following section shows that threats to their autonomy came from the Mons, not the Bamars. It is also doubtful that a single ruler in Tanintharyi controlled the entire province. There were certainly independent Tai rulers in Mottama such as Wareru (r. ca. 1281–1296), and likely in Dawei as well (Halliday 1923, pp. 50–58; Cham & Griswold 1961; Moore & San Win 2014).

THANLWIN RIVER : also called the Salween River.

76 DWAYAWADDY : reciting the same story, Kyaw Din says "Dwârâwâddî" was an old Burmese name for Siam (Kyaw Din 1917, p. 251). Possibly, it conflated early Thai polities with older Mon-Khmer cities known collectively as Dvaravati.

KOSAMBI : meaning Htauk-kwa or Takwa, which had come to be influenced by Indian merchants according to local knowledge [YWN et al.]. Also pronounced "Kawthambi" (Kyaw Din 1917, p. 251).

TANINTHARYI ISLAND : likely the riverine peninsula on which the town sits, not the marine island in the western part of the Mergui Archipelago. Until a few decades ago, canals and moats nearly surrounded the township.

77 BATTLE WITH THE CITY OF BAGO : this would have been during the reign of Binnya U (r. 1348–84) [NNC]. His rule of Martaban-Pegu was plagued with internal and external conflict (Fernquest 2006, pp. 4–5.) The *Mottama Yazawin* [*cont.*]

younger brother, Bahika Raja, rallied country folk and proclaimed himself king of Tanintharyi. Then the king of Dwayawaddy invaded Tanintharyi. With support from Danyawaddy, King Bahika Raja established a new Tanintharyi city during the conjunction of Mercury and Venus on Wednesday, fifth waxing of Kason, 735 ME.[78]

King Bahika Raja ordered construction of thirty-two satellite towns around Tanintharyi city. Twelve of them are Palaw, Palauk, Myeik-taung, Thay-ma-taung, Taung Pi-lar, Ka-lin-ban, Ta-nyet, Ta Mote, Lonkayan-taung, Pyin-win, Pan-thong-taung and Tha-note.[79]

The posts of the walls in the capital city were three *taung* deep in the ground and eight *taung* above the ground. The city was 81 *kyo* in circumference.[80] It had eight main gates and two wicket gates.

[*cont*.] states: "In the year 800 ME [1438 CE] the city [of Ye] was destroyed and became a forest again. Meanwhile, in the kingdom of Hanthawaddy, beginning with King Hsinbyushin Binnya U until the reign of its fourth monarch, King Binnya Ran [I, r. 1424–1446], the cities of Dawei, Myeik and Tanintharyi had been in rebellion. Then in 800 ME [Binnya Ran I] appointed a royal official named Dhamma Devi as *sitthugyi*, or commander-in-chief of the army, and sent him with 70,000 soldiers to seize and govern the cities of Tanintharyi. General Dhamma Devi went to the cities, defeated the enemies, and appointed a guardian-governor. Having expanded the empire he then returned towards Hanthawaddy." (Pyin-nya 1927, pp. 9–13).

78 DANYAWADDY : Rakhine [TKK]. RE-FOUNDING OF TANINTHARYI : 735 ME / 1373 CE.

79 SATELLITE TOWNS : locations of these and other places mentioned in the text are given in Appendix 5. Kyaw Din said these twelve were provinces, but that description seems inaccurate (Kyaw Din 1917, reprinted in Appendix 1 of this book). Lonkayan, for example, had an area of about 2.4 km² which was well defined by hills and ruined walls.

80 WALL DIMENSIONS : 1.4 meters below ground, 3.7 meters above ground, and 5.2 km long. Today the ruins of Tanintharyi's walls are about 3 km in circumference. Perhaps the initial measurement included the neighboring town of Lonkayan, which had walls of almost 3 km atop its surrounding ridge. By comparison, Ayutthaya's walls were about 12 km long, and Bago's were 9.5 km. Note, however, that the ruins of the walls we find today are only the last version of a long process (see: Moore 2007, pp. 19–22). Improvements, modifications and decay were constant during the life of a fortified city, and even after its demise. For example, the British removed large numbers of bricks from Tanintharyi when they built a jail for Mergui in the 19th century. (Burma 1929, 15 March 1834, Blundell to Trevelyan; and: Orr 1951, p. 7).

The kingdom of Tanintharyi city stretched to Khamaungthwe Chaung in the northeast, Win Phalone in the east, Tharlin city in the southeast, Sai-la in the south, Kunthee Kunywet Island in the west, and Mee Laung Chaung in the north.[81]

Areas upstream from Tanintharyi are Sa-tein Thaung, Ma Ma Thaung, Thutaw Ngo, Banlaw, Banlin, Thamee Hla, Wun Nar, Kyauk Sayit, Ta-ku, La Maing Kawt, Ta Ra Bwin, Padamya, Tha Htay Kwin, Leik Sein, Ye Pu, Hein Lak, Kaw Nga Pyin, Kyauk Sin, Pa Kek, Paung Seik, Pyaung Chaung, Ma Yone, Sa Leh Taung, Tat Mu, Nga Thay, Byat Aaw, Byat Htaung, Kyauk Ka Din, Za Like Pon, San Pi Chaung, Kyauk Lone Gyi, Tee, Ta Loke Chaung, Sin Ma Kyun, Sa La Wa, Pe Taung,

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81 LIMITS OF THE KINGDOM : royal boundary claims were usually gross exaggerations, but possibly these were moderate and accurate. KHAMAUNGTHWE CHAUNG: a large watercourse that joins the Greater Tenasserim River at Myitta (GPS 14.164, 98.526). Its headwaters lie another 40 km north. WIN PHALONE: local people suggest Wat Phra Non in Phetchaburi, but this seems doubtful. *Win* (ဝင်း) could mean 'enclosure' perhaps meaning a stockade on the border of Ratchaburi province. In particular, a valley called 'Tanao Si' (GPS 13.32, 99.23) lies close to the Greater Tenasserim River. A path going west was illustrated in 19th century Siamese war maps (Santanee 2004, pp. 146–7; Chakrabongse 2006). 'Phalone' may also be connected to 'Sone Phyone' and 'Taung Papone', both of which are very likely Suan Phueng in the same area (see note 237; & Twin-thin, *Yazawin Thit*, 1998, v.2, p. 60; Maung, *Konbaungset*, v.2, pp. 34–45). THARLIN CITY: possibly meaning the ancient trade junction at 'Jalinga' in the Theinkun Valley (near GPS 11.86, 99.48). The metamorphosis of names is plausible within dialects of the region (*ie*., Jalinga > Zalinga > Sa-linga > Thar-linga > Tharlin). SAI-LA: some say Phuket, but more likely Kanmaw Island, called *Chai-nan* by the Moken and *Shai-an* by Muslim sailors (White 1922; al-Mahrī 1511). The islands and jungles south of that latitude (11° 25' N) could never be controlled even in royal fantasies. In JBRS 1917, Kyaw Din's source has "Kasingte" as the southern limit. This might refer to "Kaseing-hla", a small island which a British-era map shows at GPS 10.445, 98.47 (Bagge, Arthur. "Map of Tenasserim", c. 1897; IOR/X/2237/1–6). Most other maps call it Pulo Baleih. The suffix '*te*' may indicate a tributary stream on the nearby mainland. KUNTHEE KUNYWET ISLAND: Kunthee is Hayes Island, GPS 11.85, 97.66. Kunywet Kyun is presumably Fletcher's Island, just to the south. MEE LAUNG CHAUNG: 40 km north-northeast of Myeik at GPS 12.75, 98.72. Note that Kyaw Din lists the northern limits as the "four islands of Mali, Petagee, Kyauksarit and Hngatthaik Taung." That is to say, Tavoy Island and the Moskos group.

Thinbaw Oo, Hpa Chaung, Phaya Htan, Kya Kep Da Yel, Yan Wa, Ta Ra Zin, Ta Ra Zu, and Thingan Ngote in Dawei district, which was the border of the old kingdom of Aung Thawara.[82] Areas further upstream are Mei Ngaw, Mei Pya, Thong Taung Ka Tin, Thamine, Ahtoo, Ayu, Amya, Sinphyu Che Taing and Metta city, and then Kyauktone, Zinme city and the Thanlwin River.[83]

After the death of Bahika Raja, his descendants succeeded to the throne of Tanintharyi. King Oh-daung attempted to expand the territory during his reign. In response, the king of Dwayawaddy led his army to suppress the invasion. He deployed his royal troops near Khamaungthwe Chaung, and delivered an ultimatum to King Oh-daung to surrender his person and kingdom. Oh-daung refused, but he was defeated and killed in battle by the Dwayawaddy king, The victor also abducted Queen Hnin Nwe, who had been chief queen of the last king of Tanintharyi.[84]

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82 The meaning of the final clause in this sentence is not clear in the Burmese text. Another interpretation is that the city of Aung Thawara was near the border with Dawei district. Please see Appendix 5 for further details.

83 Areas upstream from Tanintharyi : see Appendix 5 for these locations.

84 King Oh-daung : In JBRS 1917, Kyaw Din's source said King "Udaing" was killed in battle by a Thai monarch after a boundary dispute in 1538, and that Queen Hnin Nwe Devi was taken hostage. The ruler of Ayutthaya at the time was Chairachathirat (r. 1534–46), who had a reputation for military ability including use of Portuguese mercenaries and new technology. Thai chronicles describe his extensive military operations against Kampaengphet and Chiang Mai. Prince Damrong adds that Chairachathirat marched into Mon territory near Moulmein in response to an attack by Tabinshweti of Bago. However, Thai sources offer no evidence of an invasion of Tenasserim (Baker & Phongpaichit 2017, pp. 92–3; Cushman 2000, pp. 20–21; Damrong 2001, p. 90).

Elsewhere in the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*, the Thai invasion is said to have occurred in 1531 ce, followed by rebellion four years later (ch. 11). This narrative says the invading 'Shan king' was actually a Thai prince. To provincial residents, the distinction may have been meaningless. Today, residents of Tanintharyi largely agree with both accounts but add that Oh-daung—the 'Peacock King'—was placed in a sack and ritually drowned in the river to avoid shedding royal blood. The regicide is said to have occurred at the confluence of the Greater and Lesser Tenasserim rivers [ywn]. Please see the introduction (pp. xix–xxvi) for more on the complicated Thai annexation of Tenasserim.

The reign of the Dwayawaddy kings lasted for [221 years from 900 ME to 1121 ME], in which nine kings ruled Tanintharyi. The last was King Bala Che Tauk.[85] [86]

In 1121 ME, U Aung Zeya, the founder of Moksobo, suddenly occupied Mawlamyine, Ye, Dawei and Myeik towns.[87]

END OF THE FIRST BOOK

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85 KIN BALA CHE TAUK : Borommakot of Ayutthaya (r. 1733–58). Kyaw Din spelled the name Bala Kyedauk.

86 DATES : Sein's original text says : "The dynasty of Dwayawaddy kings lasted for 73 years from 119 to 192 ME in which nine kings ruled Tanintharyi." These dates are impossible to reconcile with others in the text, such as the second founding of Tanintharyi in 735 ME and Alaungpaya's invasion in 1121 ME. They don't fit any other calendar, and are also contradicted by a small mountain of evidence like contemporary European sources and Muslim sailing directions.

Moreover, local researchers are confident that the errant dates should be ignored. For example, Kyaw Din said Ayutthaya's rule in Tenasserim lasted from 1538 to 1757 CE. His sources were copies of old palm-leaf manuscripts which were mostly destroyed in a town fire in Mergui around 1912 (Kyaw Din 1917, p. 251; also in Appendix 1). Importantly, it appears that these manuscripts were not the ones used by U Gyi Sein, which came primarily from Banlaw. Both Maung Lay Tint and Khin Maung Oo agree with the 1531 date.

Reasons behind U Gyi Sein's errant dates are unknown. Assuming the transcription was faithful, a likely cause might have been damaged *pae-sars* or *parabaiks*. Partial words can be inferred by context, but partial numbers are more difficult. Conceivably, the transcriber guessed at some barely legible figures, and the subtle uncertainty was lost during editing or typesetting. Also note that there were many more kings of Ayutthaya during these 221 years. By one count, seventeen of them lasted longer than twelve months.

87 U AUNG ZEYA OF MOKSOBO : Alaungpaya, who conquered and consolidated much of present-day Myanmar, then invaded Siam via Mergui in 1759–60 CE.

City pillar and image of Shin Ma, Tanintharyi township.
Photo by Pann Hnin Yee Oo.

In 900 ME, Hanthawaddy King Shwehti occupied Dawei.[90] After the death of King Shwehti, the king of Dawei rose against Shwehti's successor. In 925 ME, King Hanthawaddy Hsinbyushin conquered Ye, Dawei, Myeik and Tanintharyi; he then had Buddha images and phayas built there.[91] Afterwards, Buddhism spread to Dwayawaddy and Ayoedaya.[92]

[*cont*.] when Tavoy was *about* to fall, many kinds of evil omens appeared. A cow dropped an eight-legged calf. A hen hatched out of a four-legged chick. A hen hatched six chicks out of three eggs. Furthermore, milled rice sprouted into leaf. Furthermore, during that same year, King Bòromtrailok passed away at Phitsanulok." (Cushman 2000, p. 18; emphasis mine). Other versions echo the story.

Strangely, many historians say this gloomy passage means Ayutthaya seized Dawei in 1488 (Wyatt 1982, p. 82; Chutintaranond 1999, p. 110; Baker & Phongpaichit 2017, p. 87, et al.). Clearly the Prasœt chronicle does not conclude this at all. If anything, the wacky omens suggest the expedition failed, and reading between the lines one suspects the survivors invented a story of divine intervention to avoid punishment from an angry king. The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* supports this conclusion, and calmly adds that Dawei fell in 1498. Please see the introduction for further discussion of this and other examples Tenasserim's doubtful historiography.

90 KING SHWETI : Tabinshwehti of Bago (r. 1530–50). The date 900 ME (1538 CE) is probably ten years too early for Dawei, but he did subdue Martaban around that time. Myanmar chronicles and local scholars strongly indicate that Toungoo never invaded Tanao-si, but instead negotiated for its customs revenue as part of a peace settlement (Twin-thin, Yazawin Thit 1998, v.2, pp. 46, 67, 123–25). Citing U Kala's *Maha Yazawingyi* (1960, v.2, p. 235), Pamaree Surakiat concurs: "When Ayutthaya lost the war in 1548, Tabinshweti demanded that King Chakkraphat of Ayutthaya pay an annual tribute to Pegu of thirty war elephants, 300 ticals of silver, and, above all, the customs revenue of Tenasserim in exchange for the return of the Ayutthayan king's son and son-in-law who had been taken hostage." (Pamaree 2005, p. 91).

91 HANTHAWADDY HSINBYUSHIN : a family name for Bayinnaung of Toungoo (r. 1550–81). The date 925 ME (1563 CE) is confirmed by other sources (Pamaree, p. 235.; U Kala 1960, v.2, p. 352.; Damrong 2001, p. 41.; et al.). The mention of a subsequent rebellion may refer to unrest that caused Bayinnaung to invade Siam a second time in 1568–9.

92 BUDDHISM SPREAD TO DWAYAWADDY AND AYOEDAYA : Buddhism existed in these places long before Bayinnaung arrived, of course, and even before [*cont*.]

After the death of King Hsinbyushin, his son succeeded to the throne. During his reign, Ye, Dawei, Myeik and Tanintharyi rose up against this successor.[93] Nevertheless, as Buddhism had spread to Tanintharyi and Ayoedaya since the time of King Hsinbyushin, many Buddha images, monasteries and phayas were built by people from all walks of life including rich persons, traders and farmers.

Buddhist monks did not hold their fasts at ordination halls on land, but rather at ordination halls on water. Shan monks still believe that ordination halls on water are more pure.[94] Rulers and people in successive periods since Kya-ka-lin had only worshipped hermits. Back when Htauk-kwa flourished, merchants from India came to trade with the town and brought many emerald Buddha images for veneration. As the time was not yet ripe for Buddhism to flourish, however, civilians, ministers, generals and rich persons merely had large emerald Buddha images built and kept at their homes. They did not have an active faith in Buddhism nor venerate those images. They only worshipped hermits.

[*cont*.] Tai and Bamar people arrived. Currently, the earliest evidence of Buddhism on the Malay Peninsula might come from a small stone sphere recovered at Khao Sam Kaeo, near Chumpon (Brigitte Borel, in Bellina 2017, pp. 593, 612), perhaps dating to the 1st century BCE. Himanshu Ray and others have described in detail the evidence showing Buddhism was practiced in the region during the early first millennium CE, when it was inhabited by Pyus and Mon-Khmers (Ray 1994. Also: Chirapravati 1994; Moore 2011-b).

There is no explanation why the *yazawin* made a distinction between Dvaravati and Ayutthaya. Possibly it has no meaning, and merely derives from the abundance of names in the region.

93 SON OF HSINBYUSHIN : Nanda Bayin (r. 1581–99), eldest son of Bayinnaung.

94 ORDINATION HALLS ON WATER : for example on boats, rafts and buildings far from shore [TKK].

11

Establishment of Myeik

Fifty-three kings ruled Tanintharyi for 254 years, starting with Eekadeh Raja in 639 ME and ending with Kyauk Bwa Mya Saw San in 893 ME.[95] During the reign of the last monarch, a Shan prince named Bya Rama Thon Tessa, who was the son of an Ayoedaya monarch known as the Lord of One Million Elephants, led tens of thousands of troops and annexed Tanintharyi where he made himself king.[96]

Sandbanks had formed at the jetty of Sin Tote city, which is now called Than Doke.[97] As the water became shallow, navigation became difficult for vessels. So, King Bya Rama Thon Tessa moved the jetty to Khe Hill in [893 ME].[98]

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95 King Kyauk Bwa Mya Saw San : another name for King Oh-daung, whose death at the hands of the Thais in 893 ME (1531 CE) was described above (see note 84) [YWN, et al]. Note that chapter 19 says the number of kings was 35.

96 Prince Bya Rama Thon Tessa : ဗြရာမသွန်တီသာ : the identity of this 'Shan prince' is uncertain. Possibly he was a son of Ramathibodi II (r. 1491–1529) who attacked Melaka unsuccessfully in 1500. That monarch was not called the 'Lord of One Million Elephants', but elephant titles were common in Ayutthaya's royal nomenclature. At the time of the 1531 invasion the Thai king was Borommarachathirat IV (r. 1529–33). His prior approval of this military action is almost certain, but the event does not appear in the sporadic Thai records.

The transliteration of the prince's name from Burmese could also be 'Bjaramathon Tessa' [TKK]. The prefix *bja* or *bya* is Tai in origin, and seems to correspond with the Shan *bhayā* and Thai *phra* (**พระ**), just as 'brayā' corresponds to *phraya* (**พระยา**), or 'prince' (see: Mangrāi 2002, p. 5). The suffix *tessa* appears to have been borrowed from Sinhalese kings, who themselves borrowed it from Buddhist legends [NS/JP].

97 Sin Tote city / Than Dote : also called Tawnauklae, GPS 12.344, 98.678

98 Jetty to Khe Hill in [893 ME] : meaning only that Thais moved the roadstead and ocean harbor to its current site at Myeik. Historically, the main commercial centers were always upriver.

Note that Sein's text had '1093 ME', which conflicts with the previous paragraph. As explained previously, the error may have arisen because of [*cont*.]

In the past, there were only about twenty households of fishermen living at the foot of Khe Hill.[99] Under the new king, people from various villages were brought to live in Myeik.[100] Households from Banlaw, Thamee Hla, Wun Nar, Kyauk Sayit, Ta-ku and other villages up the Greater Tenasserim River were taken to the new town, and their ward was called Myit Ma Yet.[101] The place to where people from the Lesser Tenasserim River were relocated was called Seik Nge Yet.

People from six villages downstream from Tanintharyi city—Zawè, Sindin, Ban La Mut, Sa Lut, Pa Nap Nge and Htone Nwe—were

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[*cont*.] difficulties in working with palm-leaf manuscripts (see note 86). Local scholars dismiss it as an obvious mistake. Additionally, 1093 ME equates to 1731 CE, a year in which Marit received an edict from Ayutthaya that harshly limited Catholic activities. A 'stone of scandal' listing the restrictions was even placed in front of the church (Breazeale 2017). The date is also half a century after the most well-documented event in the port's long history—the tenure of Samuel White as *shahbandar*. Clearly, Marit had been established long before.

99 MYEIK IN 1500 CE : numerous sources support the contention that the site was barely a village prior to its formal establishment in 1531. For example, Shay Haung Mosque is said to have been built in 1478 with donations from a local Buddhist woman, Daw Ka Lee Mar, after her Arab husband never returned from trading overseas. At the time, its location was so deep in the mangroves that it was only reached by boat (U Bu-deh. n.d.; & interview with Htone Po mosque trustees, 2019). Additionally, Ahmad ibn Mājid listed Takwa in sailing directions written around 1462, but only added "the estuary (*khōr*) of Markhī" around 1500 (BnF Ms. Arabe 2292, ff. 52–56, 103–106). His successor, Sulaimān al-Mahrī, listed "*khōr* Markhī" but never mentioned a town there (BnF Ms. Arabe 2559, ff. 21–22, 66–72, 91–92; also see: Wheatley 1961, pp. 233–243; & Tibbetts 1979, pp. 194–229). Further verification comes from the total absence of of Mergui among Portuguese maps and documents prior to the 1540s at the earliest. Please see p. xxvi in the introduction.

100 PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS VILLAGES WERE BROUGHT IN : the move was probably involuntary, as forced relocation was a common tactic of early-modern conflict and state-building in Southeast Asia. See: Reid 1980, pp. 243–4; Reid 1988, pp. 123–32; Baker & Phongpaichit 2005, p. 10; et al. For an example in Myanmar, see Than Tun, Royal Orders of Burma, part 4, entry for 21 August 1787.

101 MYIT MA YET : *myit* is another name for river, and *yet* means place, ward, community [TKK]. Many locations in the following paragraphs are given GPS coordinates in Appendices 5 & 6. They are mapped in Appendix 7. Also note that the current text has partially organized Sein's chaotic list [JP].

relocated to a ward in Myeik called Myit Nge Yet.[102] The place where farmers from Kangyi Yet, Kahan, Sa Lun, Min Than, Maunglaw and so on lived was called Lel Kyun or Alel Kyun.[103] The place where people from Shwe Dote and Than Doke lived was called Nauklae Yet.[104]

Because Mawton village was a principal settlement, there was a fixed security outpost there; this place, which is downstream from Mawton, is still called Kin Tet Maw.[105]

The place in Myeik to where people from Dawei were relocated was called Dawei Su.[106] The place to where Talai people from Ye and Mawlamyine were sent was called Talai Su.[107] Kathae people from Kya-ka-lin lived near the seashore. As there was white sand along the shore, the place was called Thae-byu as well as Kathae Su.[108]

The place where a market was built was called Zay Tan Yet.[109] The ward located south of the market was called Zay Gaung Yet. The ward

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102 Zawè, Sindin, et al. : these are villages along Zawè Chaung of the Greater Tenasserim River, northwest of Mawton.

103 Farmers from Kangyi Yet, Ka Han, et al. : all of these places are in the vicinity of Zedawun Taung (gps 12.355, 98.714), 15 km upriver from Myeik.

104 Nauklae Yet : as in Tawnauklae, 14 kilometers upriver. Note that Nauklae was called 'Malaki' in Muslim sailing directions. This may bear relation to the Arabic word *malakat*, or 'congregation of merchants', This the colloquial name for Shay Haung Pali, the oldest mosque in Myeik, c. 1487 ce [phy/jp].

105 Kin Tet Maw : *kin tet* means sentry post [tkk]. It is located just across a tributary stream from Mawton village, and locals confirm that it has retained the name to this day. Note that this sentence suggests residents from Mawton were allowed to remain in their town upriver [jp].

106 Dawei Su : *su* means community or ward [tkk].

107 Talai : usually spelled 'Talaing' meaning Mons or Mon-Khmer. The word is considered pejorative by some people.

108 Kathae people / Kathae Su : this is not a reference to Kathei or Meitei people from Manipur, though some did settle in Tenasserim. Instead, the name derives from *ka* + *thae*, (ကသဲ) roughly meaning 'of sand' [phy]. Their ethnic identity is unclear, but may have been a mix of Mokens, Malays, Shans and Karens who sought refuge in the islands. Please see note 217 for a more detailed explanation.

109 Zay Tan Yet : meaning the old market east of Khe Hill. The current market opened in the late 1920s in Seik Nge, closer to the new waterfront built by the British (Potter 2016, entry 28).

located at the head of a lake was called Kan Gaung Yet. The ward located at the end of the lake was called Kan Pya Yet. The community living at Shan Kyay Thalone Gyi was called Law Taung. The community living near Pe Tauk Min Lake was called Kangyi Yet. The place where a foundry was established was called Than Poe Yet. The place south of the market where people made a living with horse carts is still called Hlel Htein Su.[110] The place northwest of the market was called Kyee Gon.[111]

The port city established by the Shan kings was called Kin Myo, and was surrounded by a palisade nine *taung* high.[112] The city had five gates —one with brick steps leading to the jetty near the Catholic church between Seik Nge Yet and Talai Su Yet, the second to the south of the Wut Taik Monastery, the third near the lake embankment leading to Phaya Kaing village, a fourth near what is now called Mandalay Monastery, and a fifth gate, which was used for funerals, between Shwe Kyaung Hill and Khe Hill. These five gates were kept closed at night by gate guards.[113]

The Shan king had his citizens dam up the creek between the feet of Law Taung and Phaya Kaing Taung to create a big lake. Rowing competitions and activities were held in the lake during both Shan and Bamar rule.

Outside the town stockade, Nauklae Yet was in the south, Phaya Kaing and Kan Pya Yet were in the east, Talai Su Yet and Seik Nge Yet were in the west, and Dawei Su Yet and Myit Nge Yet were in the north. There was a creek called Kin Chaung at the place where the engineering office lies today, to the west of Nauklae Yet. The creek, which still exists in the north of Dawei Su, was called Northern Kin Chaung. There is a graveyard near there.[114]

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110 Hlel Htein Su : *hlel htein* can be broadly translated as coachman. [TKK]

111 Kyee Gon : *kyee* means 'silo' and *gon* can be broadly translated as 'heights'. [TKK]

112 Kin Myo : meaning 'sentry town'. This is probably a Burmese translation of what would have been a Tai name, perhaps '*Meuang-yahm*' (เมืองยาม).

Nine taung = 4.1 meters.

Shan kings : in this case the phrase means Thai monarchs of Ayutthaya.

113 Town gates : please see Appendix 7 for suggested locations.

114 Graveyard : a town plan from 1939 shows a Burmese burial ground at GPS 12.454, 98.603 ("Key Map," 1939). It was apparently destroyed by the [*cont.*]

The site on which a Chinese temple now stands was a Buddhist monastery built by local people for Sa-tein Sayadaw U Zagara.[115] The place was called Seik Nge or Sa-tein Yet after the abbot.[116] The water well to the south of the old monastery is still called Kyaung Twin.[117]

Because the monk was highly respected by followers of Buddhism, many disciples came and visited him every day. As a result, more and more people came to reside near his monastery. The monk, having frequently seen and heard about worldly matters, thought the place was no longer suitable for the *Sangha*, so he called the disciples and said he wished to live in a secluded monastery. His disciples sought a place for him on a hill far from residential areas, then built a cloister which they donated to U Zagara. This cloister, which still exists today, is some thirty *kyo* from Seik Nge Yet.[118] The monk was believed to be have been born and raised in Hanthawaddy.[119]

[*cont*.] army around 2002, along with all other burial grounds in Myeik except the Japanese cemetery (Potter 2016, entries 35–38).

115 Former monastery of Sayadaw U Zagara : the current Chinese temple is called Tian Hou Gong, located at GPS 12.4394, 98.5961. It supports a vibrant and friendly community.

116 Seik Nge / Sa-tein Yet : the neighborhood just west of Theindawgyi, at the foot of Khe Hill. Sa-tein Thaung itself is two km east of Tanintharyi township.

117 Kyaung Twin : 'monastery well'.

118 Cloister of Sayadaw U Zagara : the location is likely Taw Kyaung, GPS 12.436, 98.60. It is expressly identified as such in chapter 18, though it is much less than "thirty *kyo*" (2 km) from Seik Nge ward. Its *sima* has a stone inscription called 'Ponenyinttaung' that dates to 1103 ME (1741 CE). Interestingly, the inscription was written in the Myeik dialect (Naing Soe, *Treasures of Myeik*).

119 U Zagara / Hanthawaddy : the text previously indicated that U Zagara came from Sa-tein, Tanintharyi. Some readers believe the latter sentence was added to link Tanintharyi to Upper Myanmar. Note however that there is uncertainty about the identity of this *sayadaw*, because two monks with this name appear at different times in the text, one during the initial founding of Marit in the 1530s and another during the early Konbaung period in the 1760s and '70s. Some local scholars have written that the *sayadaw* who founded Taw Kyaung was actually Ashin Yuttaung, whose identity was later conflated with the U Zagara who led the monastery in the late 18th century [NS; U Paduma 1970].

12

PLACE NAMES

Since 500 ME, as *Buddha Sasana* gradually flourished in Aung Thawara city, gold and gems including topaz, emeralds and pearls were plentiful between Kya-ka-lin and Tanintharyi. Rubies and emeralds were abundant near the village and creek by Aung Thawara city. Therefore, these latter places were called Padamya village and Padamya Chaung.[120]

The place called Sinphyu Che Taing got its name because a white elephant was hitched there during Shan rule.[121]

A place downstream from Aung Thawara city is called Ta Ra Bwin. The story behind the name is this : the sea which is now west of Palaw was previously a plantation; the people there had a saying about the area that went, "Mali Farm offers high yields and has 80,000 varieties of crops."[122] One day at Mali Farm, a man named Maung Kyauk Lone wanted to eat glutinous rice flakes, so he asked his farmer friend for some. His friend gave him a sickle and told him to reap as much paddy as he wanted. Maung Kyauk Lone did so, then borrowed a bamboo shoulder-yoke with two sharp ends, known locally as a *ta-ra-bwin*. He carried the sheaf of paddy in this yoke and went home. On his way there, the *ta-ra-bwin* broke. Maung Kyauk Lone threw it away in anger, and where one sharp end of the shoulder-yoke penetrated the ground, a tree of bamboo grew. The place later became a village known as Ta Ra Bwin village.[123]

The place called Saba Hlaing Taung,[124] which today is in the sea near Myeik, was said to be formed by paddy sheaves that piled as high

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120 PADAMYA : Burmese for ruby; on the Greater Tenasserim River at GPS 12.29, 99.06.

121 SINPHYU CHE TAING : 'white elephant hitching-post' in Burmese [TKK]. The village of Sinbyudaing is now found at GPS 14.04, 98.89.

SHAN RULE : it is unclear if this refers to Ayutthaya or a local Tai authority.

122 MALI FARM : မလိလယ် : unidentified; perhaps meaning the coast opposite Mali Kyun (Tavoy Island).

123 TA RA BWIN VILLAGE : GPS 12.29, 99.034

124 SABA HLAING TAUNG : meaning 'Paddy-sheaf Mountain' in Burmese; it is actually just a rock in the sea at GPS 12.635, 98.65.

as a mountain after being thrown away by this same man, Maung Kyauk Lone. A nearby hill called Lone Sa Yar Taung got its name because a Myanmar farmer and a Shan farmer fought over land there.[125]

Mali Farm turned into water for the visit of King Alaungsithu, the powerful monarch of Bagan.[126] The farm was obliged to change itself to enable his royal barge to navigate the coast. Since then, ancestors said the farm was gradually diminished by the erosion of water. The king was visiting the area together with his royal family, consorts and courtiers while his chief queen was at her full-term pregnancy. When she had labor pains, the barge returned to the administrative capital of

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125 Lone Sa Yar Taung : *lone* means to wrestle or grapple in Burmese [tkk]. This might be Canister Bank at gps 13.03, 98.468 [jp] Local fishermen say that it used to have one of the ancient statues that lined the coast. These might have been landmarks showing the way, or were deities similar to Badrmacan [ns].

126 Alaungsithu, or Cañsu I (r. 1112–67) : a revered king in Myanmar, who is said to have traveled throughout his dominions. In legends and chronicles he had supernatural powers to turn land into water to enable his travels.

Unfortunately, plausible references to his travels are usually shorn of the fabulousness that surrounds them. For example, the *Glass Palace Chronicle* says Alaungsithu departed from Pathein surrounded by eight million boats, received a "live emerald" that allowed him to see the hidden Naga king, then brought stone images of musicians back to life before heading over to Sri Lanka to accept the king's daughter and a magic boat that held 800,000 men. Oh, and he also had an army of 16 million soldiers and Sri Lanka was his vassal (Tin & Luce 1923, pp. 113–18). Yet this exact same source—unsupported by evidence, apparently—is employed in claims that Bagan put down a rebellion in Tenasserim and even controlled the entire coast to Phuket (*eg.* Aung-Thwin 1985, p. 58; Lubeigt 1999, p. 53). Tenasserim is not mentioned anywhere else in *Glass Palace* (and rarely in other Myanmar chronicles before 1759), and this absence is arguably more important than its brief and dubious mention.

When combined with ulterior motives like fascist nationalism, this kind of historiography is so poor and egregious that it veers into deception.

Of course, the *Tanintharyi Yazawin* has its own yarns of which Mali Farm is one. The tale has no application to history, but it is important ethnographically because it shows how diverse groups in Tenasserim developed origin stories for places they shared in common. One hopes it won't be used to 'prove' that Alaungsithu was a geologic force as well. Fortunately, U Gyi Sein largely separated ostensibly factual chapters from mythological ones, perhaps because he compiled the work in the 20th century. [jp]

Tanintharyi. The village where the queen felt her labor pains thus became known as Wun Nar village, and the name remains unchanged today.[127] Some distance from this village, the queen gave birth to a girl, and therefore the place is called Thamee Hla village.[128]

The king had a brave, obedient general named Ban Lauk who established a town near Tanintharyi. It was called Ban Lauk after him, and over time the name became Banlaw.[129]

Opposite from Tanintharyi, the eastern bank of a *chaung* is called Bodhi Kan as well as Bodhi Yet, because a *bo*-tree branch brought from Ceylon was planted there and properly fenced with bricks. The place west of the city where a rich man lived is stilled called Thahtay Taung.[130]

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127 Wun Nar village : 'Labor-pain village' in Burmese [nna]. Also spelled 'Wunna', it is located on the river between Banlaw and Ta-ku at: gps 12.22, 99.075

128 Thamee Hla village : meaning 'daughter beautiful' in Burmese [tkk]. Located up the Greater Tenasserim River at gps 12.163, 99.06.

129 Banlaw : ဘန်လော : according to people in the region, a monastery in this village produced the bulk of the material that U Gyi Sein used for the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. It lies at gps 12.11, 99.053. Laterite ruins nearby indicate that it was once a large and important settlement. The name may have a dual origin in Tai such as **บ้านล้อ** : *Baan-lor*. For example, VOC maps show a 'Ban Lauw' near Ayutthaya ('Anon.. 1695'). Alternatively, Sein said 'Maunglaw' evolved from 'Maung Paw' in local usage (see note 151). Thus, Banlaw could have come from **บ้านโพธิ์** : *Baan Pho*, which in turn derives from **โพธาราม** : *Photaram*, the monastery of the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, India, where Buddha attained enlightenment.

130 Bodhi Kan : just across the Lesser Tenasserim River from Tanintharyi town at gps 12.089, 99.166. In this case, *kan* means riverbank.

Thahtay Taung : literally, 'Rich Man Hill' in Burmese [tkk]. It may have been across the river from the old city at gps 12.089, 99.003 [jp].

There is a hill called Wut Sin Taung in the center of Tanintharyi. It is said that in the past the city was a village where Shin Arahan from Bagan came to deliver sermons to the residents.[131] The monk then practiced deep meditation on a boulder at the top of the hill. Soon, the white elephant that had emerged when Tanintharyi was founded came again. It crouched down before the boulder where Shin Arahan was meditating, then paid homage to him several times with its trunk and front legs. The king, courtiers and people were much delighted to see it, and thus the hill is still called Wut Sin Taung today.[132]

The place called Tat-U got its name because a company of military guards was stationed there.[133]

During the period of prosperity, Tanintharyi had fourteen satellite towns with armies and moats. Along the river which in the past was called Chaung Gyi, these secondary towns were : [134]

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131 Shin Arahan : a revered monk from the Bagan period. An inscription found in a cave in Upper Burma describes his mission to Tenasserim in 1148 or 1248 CE (the date is unclear) : "At dawn on Tuesday, the 10th waxing of Tazaungmon [510 or 610] Sakkaraj, [the king] commanded his Minister Kyawzwa to perform some meritorious act of charity worthy of His Majesty. The minister replied that he was willing to build a pagoda, but was in need of a relic of [*cont*.] [*cont*.] Gautama Buddha to build over; and on this account he was much troubled in mind and remained without food for seven days. Thereupon the king of devas appeared to him in a vision saying, 'Nobleman and supporter of the Religion! Be not anxious! Send a monk down to Tanansari prañ.' A monk, Shin Arahan, was accordingly sent, and when he came back with a relic, the minister enshrined it in a cave ..." However, a number of scholars judge the inscription to be unreliable and possibly from later date. (Luce & Shin 1969, v.1, p. 410; Duroiselle 1921, № 277; Taw Sein Ko 1892 p. 114–15).

132 Wut Sin Taung : located in the northeast corner of the town at GPS 12.091, 99.0137. In Burmese, *wut* means 'crouch' and *sin* means 'elephant', thus 'Crouching Elephant Hill' [TKK]. However, *wut* (วัด) is also Thai for monastery, while *sīl* (ศีล : pronounced 'sīn') refers to rules of Buddhist conduct. Within Tenasserim's tolerant, polyglot culture, there is no conflict between the two interpretations. Names are shared by different ethnicities, each with its own pronunciation, meaning and narrative. [JP].

133 Tat-U : meaning 'vanguard' in Burmese. Local people believe Portuguese mercenaries had a barracks here, just outside the southern wall and not too far from their graveyard [TKK/YWN].

134 Chaung Gyi : meaning the Greater Tenasserim River. Please see Appendix 5.

Ban Lauk city, now Banlaw village

Ta Ra Bwin city, now Ta Ra Bwin village

Old Aung Thawara city

Kyauk Pan city, now Kyar Gaung village

Ran Bi city, now a Karen village called Ta Ra Zu or Ta Ra Zin

Myat Bi city, now Sinphyu Che Taing

Satellite towns along Seik Nge, also known as Chaung Wel, were : [135]

Lel Taung city, now Lel Taung village

Nyunt Bun city now Nyaung Pin Kwin village

Theinkun city now Theinkun village[136]

Downstream from Tanintharyi city were :

old Mawton city, called Ban Shaung

Singu city, a place between Tonbyaw Nge and Khone Maw villages; it is now called Singu village[137]

Shwe Htote city, now Than Doke village or Tawnauklae[138]

Mareik, the horse-hitching-post jetty, now called Myeik

Pula Yeikkha State, now Palaw

All of these were fortified towns, and except Singu, each town was administered by a *myowun* and had military guards. All the villages, big and small, engaged in trading and farming, and thus enjoyed prosperity. Singu was a small town built while Kya-ka-lin was flourishing. It was not administered by a myowun, but by a *myo-thagyi*.[139] Big and small villages such as Ma Ma Thaung, Sa-tein Thaung, Thamee Hla, Wun Nar, Kyauk Sayik, Ta-ku and La Maing Kawt, which were located close to the fortified towns, were boom villages thanks to betel-nut trading. In the past, Ta-ku village was rich in tin and minerals, while a rich deposit of gold was found in Baw Wa Creek near Ta Ra Bwin village. Bodhi Kan was close to the royal capital, and was an affluent neighborhood at the time.

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135 Seik Nge : meaning 'little jetty'.
Chaung Wel : meaning the Lesser Tenasserim River.

136 Theinkun : သိန်းခွန်း is the Burmese pronunciation of 'Singkon' : **ด่านสิงขร** [ns]. This is the Tai name of the old village at gps 11.875, 99.173, and the valley, river and pass that lead to the Gulf of Thailand.

137 Singu village : ဆင်ကူး, meaning 'elephant crossing'. It is now called Sindin.

138 Shwe Htote : now called Tawnauklae or Than Doke. In the text, the name of the town changes from Sin Htote (ဆင်ထုတ် : 'elephant trade') to Shwe Htote (ရွှေထုတ် : 'gold trade') without explanation.

139 Myo-thagyi : village leader at a lower level than a mayor or *myowun*.

All the big villages including Ohn Bin Kwin, Kyauk Mee Kyaung and Sa Kyet grew rice and produced a wide variety of products. Ta Mote Chone and Tha Puk Leik villages were rich in tin and minerals. Gemstones including emeralds, jade, gold and silver were found in parts of Nga Wun Chaung and Kyauk Moe Chaung. All the forests and mountains such as Kyauk Moe Taung and Lay Tha Taung were rich in *ka-la-mak*, and there were endless forests of aromatic trees near Ye Pu, Kyar Gaung and Thingan Ngote villages.[140]

Indawgyi was a big lake with five kinds of lotus—sacred lotus, red lotus, white lotus, *pone na yeik* lotus and *kaung laung* lotus—where princes played with pleasure boats together with the white elephant. The lake was called Indawgyi because it was used by members of the royal family.[141]

During the time of Shan rule, domesticated elephants were to capture wild elephants around Inma Chaung.[142] Mahouts would dress up

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140 Ka-la-mak : ကရမက်, likely *Mansonia gagei* Drummond, or 'bastard sandalwood'. This tree was often sought when more valuable aromatic timber had been harvested to exhaustion. It was a cheaper form of wood for the cremation pyres of Buddhists and Hindus. As a medicinal paste with the same name, it is still used in Myanmar (DeFilipps & Krupnick 2018, p. 175). Outside Myanmar the name is often applied to other species of aromatic wood, particularly agarwood. The confusion may have come from early European traders who sought aromatic woods in different ports, where merchants could have profited from their ignorance. For example, see: Barbosa 1921, v.2, pp. 209–210. In the 1930s, Irish botanist Arthur Kerr saw people collecting the species from Tenasserim's forests during his solo journey across the old trade route (Kerr 1933).

141 Indawgyi : meaning 'royal big lake', [tkk]. Probably at gps 11.95, 99.09

142 Inma Chaung : local people now call it Indaw Chaung. In general, it refers to an area of creeks and marshes that begins ten km south-southeast of Tanintharyi town. Tai-speakers are prominent there, and one of the main villages is called 'Shan Indaw'. It seems to have been prime elephant country; villagers in Theinkun even speak of an elephant graveyard hidden in the forests. One can also dream that Indaw contained the elephant *kraal* that surely existed somewhere in Tenasserim during Ayutthaya times. For detailed discussion of the jumbo traffic through Tanao-si, please see Dhirivat na Pombejra's 2016 essay, "Catching and Selling Elephants: trade and tradition in 17th century Siam."

In this case 'Shan rule' likely refers to Ayutthaya, though export of elephants from Tenasserim began under autonomous Tai-speaking polities.

extravagantly and goad wild elephants until they reacted. When the elephant attacked, the mahout dodged aside, then jumped on the head of the elephant and tamed it by repeatedly sitting and jumping up and down on its body.

Two large, strong, domesticated elephants always kept guard for the mahouts as they trained the wild elephants. The kings, courtiers and citizens would come to watch mahouts tame the wild animals. The mahouts then gave the tamed elephants to the king, who rewarded them with cash and kind.

The village just downstream from Tanintharyi city was and still is called Auk Kin because a sentry post was there.[143] The riverside from Tanintharyi to old Mawton was full of residential buildings and brokerage houses. Later, the area became gradually deserted. It is now largely uninhabited with only bushes and some cropland. Small villages such as Htone Nwe, Ban La Mut, Sindin and Zawè near Mawton and Myit Nge didn't boom as much as the big villages.

Today's Pa Wa village was a port town called Chaung Wa during Htauk-kwa's period of prosperity.[144] The town was mainly occupied by merchants. Over time, the creek silted up, and the name changed to A-wa as the creek disappeared.[145] Later it was called Pa Wa.

Ashae Ta Lar Phone and Anauk Ta Lar Phone were not towns like Pa Wa, but they were very pleasant places to live.[146] Upstream from Ashae Ta Lar Phone, a bandit was executed by the myowun of Chaung Wa on a small island near the opposite bank of the river. The island was therefore called Lu Thet Kyun.[147] A small island to the north of Pa Wa village was called Htan Bin Kyun and served as a dockyard for

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143 Auk Kin village : 'below guard' in Burmese. Located one km west of Tanintharyi township; the current military base means its role is unchanged.

144 Chaung Wa : 'creek mouth' in Burmese. Located at gps 12.13, 98.886.

145 A-wa : that is to say, the word 'mouth' or 'opening' was retained even after the creek was restricted. Watercourses altered by silt often indicate thriving settlements as people cleared forest and dammed streams for agriculture.

146 Ashae Ta Lar Phone and Anauk Ta Lar Phone : *ashae* is east and *anauk* is west in Burmese [tkk]. They are located on either side of the Greater Tenasserim River near gps 12.17, 98.875.

147 Lu Thet Kyun : 'human-kill island' in Burmese. Probably near gps 12.13, 98.896.

merchant vessels.[148] Because sentries were stationed at the village of Thabyaybin, it is now called Thabyaybin Kin village.[149]

Tonbyaw, Kone Hmaw and Tha Kan villages were large settlements that served as buffers for Ban Shaung *myo*, which was located northeast of Mawton village.

Because sentries were stationed in the village of Mazaw, it is now called Mazaw Kin Tet village. The village which Prince Parama Raja passed on his way to and from Pula Yeikkha country is called Min Than village.[150] The village where a gong emerged was called Maung Paw village, which became Maunglaw with the passage of time.[151] The place which today is called Mingoke was Myin Toke in the past because a horse toppled over there.[152] Nyaung-bi and Anyin were big, booming villages because merchants, brokers and rich people lived there during a prosperous era of Sin Tote city.[153]

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148 Htan Bin Kyun dockyard : perhaps the island at GPS 12.15, 98.88. Due to massive flows and heavy silt, islands in the river have changed over the centuries.

149 Thabyaybin Kin : the sentry post (*kin*) was likely located at the strategic spot atop the 130 meter high hill that commands a sharp bend in the river, at GPS 12.217, 98.887. The village is now located just north of the hill.

150 Min Than village : *min* means king or ruler; *than* derives from the verb *ku-than*, meaning to travel or go from place to place [TKK]. Located at the ferry crossing to Maunglaw, GPS 12.338, 98.767.

151 Maung Paw / Maunglaw : *maung* is 'gong'; *paw* is 'to emerge' [TKK], while *maunglaw* can be translated peacefully as 'row on the river' [PHY]. The earlier name likely had a meaning in Tai as well. It could be as simple as 'Mueang Por' : **เมืองพ่อ**, or 'Town of the Father'. But it might also have referred to **โพธิ์** : *Pho*, a shortened form of **โพธาราม** : *Photaram.* This is the monastery of the bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, India, where Buddha attained enlightenment. Today, the beautiful, fertile island of Maunglaw is divided into several parts. The old settlement appears to have been centered near GPS 12.33, 98.76.

152 Mingoke/Myin Toke : *myin* means horse, and *toke* means restricted movement [TKK]. It is often labeled on maps as Mingok and called Pyin Wun by locals. A monastery with Buddha images dating to the Ayutthaya era is located at GPS 12.297, 98.784.

153 Nyaung-bi and Anyin : roughly seven km west of Maunglaw, near GPS 12.3, 98.7. The latter village is now scattered into several parts on both sides of the river.

13

HISTORY OF ZEDAWUN PHAYA

The founding monarch of the Kingdom of Ava became deeply devoted to Buddhism.[154] In those years, Buddhist monks were living at Jetavana Monastery in Shravasti, India, where the Lord Buddha had dwelled for a long time while he was alive. The king of Ava respectfully invited five monks from this Indian monastery to one he built in the city of Ava, which he likewise named Jetavana Monastery.

At the same time, a merchant from Sin Tote city was engaged in overseas trade with big countries such as Ava, which was also known as Yadana Pura. This rich merchant often went to Ava for trade, and he gradually found faith in Buddhism because he frequently heard sermons delivered by the monks of Jetavana Monastery.

One day, he asked the abbot of the monastery to deliver sermons in his home country. So, the abbot requested that a well-venerated monk go with the merchant to Tanintharyi. Gratified, the merchant respectfully brought the monk to Sin Tote. Just west of the town's riverbank stands a hill which was later called Zedawun Taung.[155] Then, with his family and friends, the rich man built a monastery for the monk on the plain at the eastern foot of this small mountain.

Because the monk came from Jetavana Monastery of Ava, he was known as Zedawun Sayadaw. He urged his followers to renovate a phaya and vaulted passage that had been built on the hill by King Mani Sithu in 175 ME.[156] The phaya was likewise named Zedawun Phaya after the sayadaw. The monk also urged his followers to hold annual pagoda

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154 FOUNDING MONARCH OF THE KINGDOM OF AVA : this is often accepted as Thado Minbya (r. 1365–67 CE), but the text is unclear which king is meant.

155 ZEDAWUN TAUNG : GPS 12.357, 98.714, across the river from Tawnauklae. In Burmese, Zedawun (ဇေတဝန်) and Jetavana are similar when written, but distinct when spoken.

156 KING MANI SITHU : the identity is unclear, and the date of 175 ME (813 CE) is earlier than known monarchs of Bagan. Speculatively, it could be Narapatisithu of Bagan (r. 1174–1211 CE) coupled with a mis-transcribed European calendar year (*ie*. 1175 CE > 175 ME).

festivals. Thus, since 644 ME a *phaya pwe-daw* has been held every year beginning on the third waning of Thadingyut.[157] Devotees make wishes by offering lights and various flowers to the phaya on each evening of the celebration.

The *pwe-daw* starts around four o'clock in the afternoon on the third waning of Thadingyut. The celebration goes on throughout the night with dancing and singing. Around four o'clock in the morning on the fourth waning of Thadingyut, devotees offer a wide variety of meals to the Buddha and *Sangha*, including rice, butter, fruits, honey, electuaries and refreshments made with milk, cream and the first crop of paddy. This is done with hope that their meritorious deeds will help them attain Nirvana. On that day, people from all corners of Tanintharyi come to the festival by boat, and the river is teeming with large and small vessels full of devotees and revelers.

14

San Hla Taung and other places near Zedawun

The story of how this hill became known as San Hla Taung is that the merchant from Sin Tote who conveyed the venerable monk from Zedawun Monastery had a pretty daughter. The girl had fine, dark hair as long as four and one-half *taung*.[158] The upper and lower parts of her hair were equally full, and when untied it touched the ground with the tip curled up. Therefore, she was named Ma San Hla by her family.[159]

With permission from her parents and relatives, she pulled seven strands of hair from her head and put them in a gold case. She put this onto a gold tray and placed a Buddha statue on top. Afterwards, she built a phaya on a hill and enshrined these religious objects into its

157 Zedawun Phaya Pwe-daw : 644 ME is 1282 CE, and the third waning of Thadingyut falls in October. Remarkably, this pagoda festival is still held every year.

158 Four and one-half taung : approximately two meters.

159 Ma San Hla : literally, 'girl hair beautiful'.

reliquary. Later, the place was known as San Hla Taung Phaya. The area at the foot of the hill was called Pyin Nge because there was a small patch of land there. It was later known as Pyinn Nge.[160]

The origin of the name of Kahan village is that long ago many *bahans*, or pyrites, were found there. Thus, the village was called Bahan, which later became Kahan.[161] According to other villagers, however, long ago Shan people dug lakes at the village. Ages later the village was named Kan Haung, or 'old lake', which then became Kahan village.

Once, there was a village called Ta-nyet. It later became known as Nandawya, because King Alaungpaya built a temporary palace there for a short stay during his military march to Ayoedaya in 1121 ME. Therefore, it was called Nandawya.[162] The village upstream from Ta-nyet village was named after the mountains to the east and known as Taung Shay, or 'long mountain range'. Taung Shay village was also called Taung Nyo village for the brown-colored mountain nearby. The remaining villages were named after the occupations of each community.

The background of Taung Pi-lar is this : looking from the paddy farm where the *ta-ra-bwin* was broken by Maung Kyauk Lone, a mountain range can be seen stretching from south to north. Therefore, the hill became known as Taung Pi-lar ('mountains lying athwart'), and the nearby village was named likewise.[163] From Taung Pi-lar, one can enjoy

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160 PYINN NGE : 'earthen surface small' in Burmese; located near GPS 12.367, 98.691.

161 KAHAN VILLAGE : GPS 12.366, 98.724. BAHANS, OR PYRITES : *ie*. fool's gold.

162 NANDAWYA : *nandaw* (နန်းတော်) means 'palace' in Burmese, and thus was often bestowed on villages that temporarily hosted a Myanmar king during his travels. This was the case with Nandawya-yua, where Alaungpaya stayed briefly during his march through Tenasserim in early February 1760 CE. The village is nestled in hills north of the Mazaw Plain at GPS 12.434, 98.83. The route shows that he did not personally enter Marit, but instead sent troops there under a trusted commander. This is further confirmed by the Royal Orders of Burma, part 3, which for 7 February 1760 states : "Theinga Set brought the report that Min Hla Yaza, Mani Set, Thamanta Thura and men of Thu Nge Daw and Thay Nat had conquered the port of Marit. The king was immensely pleased with their services." (Than Tun 1983–1990, vol. 3, p. 69.)

163 TAUNG PI-LAR : also spelled Hpi Lar or Philar, it is located at GPS 12.37, 98.743. Atop the central hill of the village sits a small phaya with a view of the [*cont*.]

a panorama of all five mountains which stand apart from each other. Due to this same appearance, the village had been named Taung Bye ('separate mountains') by the ancestors of its inhabitants.

15

Palaw

When King Parama Raja occupied Pula Yeikkha city of the Ogre King, he established a city-state for human beings. The state was named after Pula Yeikkha city and became known as Palaw. This township was established many years earlier than Myeik and was contemporary with Shwe Htote township. Palaw grew rice on a large scale, thereby attracting a great number of rice merchants and traders.

Later, a Shan[164] governor was appointed to administer Palaw township. Then, in 1121 ME King Alaungpaya made his military march to Ayoedaya through the area. One of the villages was re-named for a temporary palace erected by Alaungpaya. Thus, it was called Palaw Nandaw village, later known as Nan-taung village.[165]

[*cont*.] distant river. It is "[s]aid to have been built in 1208 AD, on the occasion of the visit of Narapati Sithu, King of Pagan, to Mergui." (Burma. *Amended List of Ancient Monuments*, 1960, pp. 2–3). An actual visit by this king is doubtful, but he could have commissioned the site because Bagan influenced Tanintharyi in cultural ways that far exceeded its political and logistical limits. In particular, religious donations may have been a way to extend the empire's presence without the risk and expense of military adventures. For example, King Mindon donated the *Maha-loka-marazein* image to Dawei in 1876. At the time, Myanmar had no hope of dislodging British forces from a place that was historically its rebellious southern limit. Yet the impressive Buddha image sustained a link between residents of the far south and Upper Burma which outlasted foreign occupation. Today, Mindon's donation is still revered while colonial buildings crumble. [JP]

164 Shan : whether this meant a Thai from the east or a Tai from Tanintharyi, his authority almost certainly derived from Ayutthaya.

165 Palaw Nandaw village : probably near GPS 12.973, 98.662.

Palauk township is a day's drive north of Palaw township. Palauk used to be a fortified town when Dawei was ruled by Myanmar kings. By mutual agreement, the Shan and Dawei-Myanmar kings erected a stone pillar as the border marker in a village between Shan territory and Dawei Palauk, and this was known as Pyi-char village.[166]

16

Buddha Sasana flourishes in Tanintharyi

King Eekadeh Raja, who turned the town of Tanintharyi into a royal capital, was endowed with *hpon* and physical prowess.[167] He had numerous combat elephants including four white ones. Because this king conquered Dawei, Ye, Kyaikkhami and Mawlamyine townships, Tanintharyi became influential in the country.

The Shan kings believed in and took refuge in the Buddha. They conveyed Shan monks from Chiang Mai and Kanbawza Province for reverence.[168] Unlike today, local people of races such as the Bamar and Talai did not take refuge in the *Buddha Sangha*; instead, they kept Buddha statues at home for veneration.[169]

Some Myanmar merchants frequented the royal capital of Ava and thus had friendly relations with Buddhist monks residing there. They later became devout Buddhists who took up permanent residence in Ava.

Other merchants also supplicated to venerable monks of the royal capital of Ava. They said that Ayokeda Division, Dwayawaddy and

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166 Pyi-char village : meaning, 'border village'. It was located at gps 13.19, 98.635, at the confluence of Pyicha and Balu creeks [ns/jp].

167 Hpon : ဘုန်း, roughly meaning masculine personal or social power resulting from merit gained in past lives. However, *hpon* is a Myanmar concept that is difficult to fully describe.

168 Kanbawza Province : an archaic name for an area in southern Shan State, including the capital city of Taunggyi.

169 Bamar and Talai did not take refuge in the Buddha Sangha : that is, Burmese and Mon people only worshiped images of the Buddha rather studying than the teachings of Buddhist monks.

Ayoedaya were distant from Myanmar lands, but the Shan territory of Tanintharyi was not so far because only a *chaung* separated it from Hanthawaddy.[170] These merchants then invited monks from Ava to the Shan state of Tanintharyi province. Fulfilling the requests, some monks came along with lay persons.

There were no ships available in those times,[171] so monks could only return to visit Hanthawaddy, Yadanapura and the royal capital of Ava once or twice a year. When monks from Shwe Htote arrived back home from their one- or two-year pilgrimages around Myanmar, there were emotional reunions between them and their relatives. Monks who got bored with life in Tanintharyi and wished to return to lands in Myanmar had their desire fulfilled only after having made preparations for a year or two.

Sa-tein Sayadaw, Zedawun Sayadaw and Shwe Htote Sayadaw strictly observed the code of conduct for Buddhist monks and practiced meditation rigorously. Therefore they were celebrated by the laity. Unlike today, however, there were few consecrated grounds, so the Shan monks did not have many ordination halls. It was also difficult for them to consecrate new grounds for ordination halls because there were not enough members of the Buddhist Order.

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170 OTHER MERCHANTS ... : translation of this confusing paragraph is speculative. The *yazawin* seems to be making a symbolic statement that Tenasserim's religious connection to Upper Burma was stronger than its political connection to Ayutthaya and Dvaravati (Dwayawaddy). Ayokeda seems misspelled from 'Ayoedaya' and means the country rather than the city.

171 NO SHIPS : likely meaning there were no ocean-going ships that regularly plied the route between Tenasserim and Burma. The people of Myanmar were always adept at navigating their formidable rivers, but not the open sea. The route from Myeik to Yangon or Bago also presented two major obstacles: 1) monsoon winds, which could be both friend and foe, and 2) the Gulf of Martaban, where tides, currents and shoals were so dangerous that foreign sailors usually avoided it. *The English Pilot* of 1703 explicitly warned against going one degree too far north when approaching 'Mergim', because then: "... you come foul of the Mortavans, which all Men strive to shun, by reason of the Tides meeting, that makes a strange boor [tidal bore] when 'tis low water, it rises at once 12 or 14 foot; all Men are shy of this place." (Thornton 1703, p. 61. Also see: Potter 2020, p. 8.) Arguably, these dangers posed an ever greater obstacle than the eroded hills of the Tenasserim range.

In consequence, water surfaces were the only places where the monks could build ordination halls to carry out the most important rites. There was also a belief that implementing great rites in floating ordination halls was more formal. So, the Shan monks carried out great rites upon lakes rather than the ground. In this way, the *Sasana* spread to towns and villages across the country. King Parama Raja strongly and repeatedly urged his people to build more phayas and dig more lakes and wells, not only in the royal capital but also in towns and villages.[172]

In olden days, as some Shan, Bamar and Talai people lacked proper knowledge and skills, the prosperity of their towns was very limited.

Ta Ra Bwin was a heavily populated town with a rocky mountain to the west.[173] The mayor and people held discussions about constructing tunnels inside this rocky mountain. Then, they built caves and tunnels and conveyed emerald, gold and silver Buddha statues into the caves for public homage. However, the areas were not spacious enough to keep the statues conveyed there. Therefore, they built more caves in the upper layer, and kept an emerald Buddha statue within the upper-most cave.

In times past, businessmen and wealthy persons from Shravasti, Rajgir, Kosambi and Cetuttara states,[174] where the *Sasana* shines as bright as the sun at noon, had Buddha statues in a preaching posture carved out of emeralds for veneration. The Shans imitated these to make emerald Buddha images for their own reverence. Some said these images resembled green men in a seated position.

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172 Shan monks ... Parama Raja : again, the 'Shans' of Tāṇa-sirī described here were politically and culturally distinct from Tai-speakers of the Chao Phraya basin, Shan Plateau and elsewhere. The following paragraph also indicates that while Shans prevailed in a political sense, they were part of a very diverse population that included Bamars, Mons and Karens, almost certainly alongside other groups like Indians and Malays.

173 Ta Ra Bwin : gps 12.29, 99.03. About eight km west-northwest of town, there are two *taungs* which rise above 300 meters. It is unknown if one of these is the 'rocky mountain'.

174 Shravasti, Rajgir, Kosambi and Cetuttara : city-states in northern India associated with the life of Gautama Budddha. The last may have been legendary, but it appears in Myanmar's version of the Ramayana tale (Rooney 2017, pp. 81, 84).

Today, the *Sasana* is flourishing in Myanmar, and Myanmar people have become devout Buddhists. When it comes to the Three Gems, Myanmar people are by nature very generous in buying items of any kind regardless of price, then donating them to gain merit.[175] People of different religions, being aware of such piety, make a wide variety of religious products and market them to Buddhists because they know these products sell well. For example, vendors in the bazaar sell pictures depicting Sujata, a daughter of wealthy parents, offering milk gruel to the would-be Buddha while he sits in a cross-legged position under the *bo* tree. Similarly, emerald Buddha statues that were popular among wealthy men of western India were sold to Shan people.

At first, the Shans were not much interested in Buddhism even though many rich men from western India brought Buddha statues and explained his teachings to them. Gradually, Shan communities became civilized and exposed to Buddhism. Since the reign of the Shan dynasty, throughout Myanmar rule and until colonial rule, an annual pagoda fair has been held at Ta Ra Bwin Rocky Mountain. Also, the Shan governor of Ta-ku town strongly exhorted his people to perform meritorious deeds regularly so they could attain fruitful results, not only in the secular world but also in the *Samsara*. In response to his constant exhortations, local people of townships and districts in the province organized the *Ta Ra Bwin Kyauk-taunggyi Phaya Pwe-daw*, which continues on a grand scale even today.[176]

For public obeisance, the king of Tanintharyi built a phaya on the summit of the *taung* now called Wut Sin, or Crouching Elephant Hill, where he enshrined religious objects into the reliquary. Prince Byassadi Raja, the youngest of the three princes of the king, ascended the throne in 710 ME.[177] One year after his coronation, he cast a Buddha statue in a

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175 THREE GEMS : Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha (members of Buddhist Order).

176 TA RA BWIN KYAUK-TAUNGGYI PHAYA PWE-DAW : literally, 'Shoulder-yoke village Rocky Mountain Pagoda Fair'. This huge festival still occurs every year around Thingyan, the Myanmar New Year. It attracts people from Tanintharyi, Myeik, Dawei, Mon State and beyond [YWN].

177 KING OF TANINTHARYI ... PRINCE BYASSADI RAJA : this likely refers to local rulers, as the region was still autonomous in 710 ME (1348 CE). Despite dubious boundary claims from neighbors, none had the logistical ability to permanently [*cont.*]

crossed-legged sitting position at Nawa Htet Taung. It was made with an alloy of bronze and gold in a ratio of two to one. The height of the statue was about nine *taung*, two *maik* and three *let-thit*.[178] He kept the statue in his precinct for reverence. He also built a phaya to the west of this Buddha image. According to legends, if a man stood on the lap of the statue and raised one arm, he could only reach as high as its forehead.

17

Buddha Sasana during the Shan Dynasty

During the time of the Shan dynasty, there were not enough monks to consecrate buildings into ordination halls, and there were no ordination halls at the monasteries of towns, villages and hamlets established by the Shans.[179] However, there were many mounds of old phayas and

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[*cont.*] occupy Tāṇa-sirī before the 16th century. In the chronicles, invasions always seem to lead to failure or brief occupation. The *Razadarit Ayedawbon* indicates that Martaban subjected the region from 1320–23, then was defeated in a subsequent invasion (Naing Pann Hla 2005, pp. 38–9). The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* states that both Bago and Ayutthaya were repulsed around 1370, and the *Mottama Yazawin* says that Tāṇa-sirī rebelled against Bago in 1438. The rebellion was apparently successful because afterwards the aggressors developed the port of Ye instead. (Pyin-nya 1927, pp. 9–13; Pamaree 2005, p. 89).

178 Buddha statue on Nawa Htet Taung : also called Nagă Kap Taung, this hill is just upriver from Tanintharyi at GPS 12.096, 99.025. It was carved into terraces and surfaced with thousands of laterite blocks. Please see note 28].

Nine taung, two maik and three let thit : approximately 4.4 meters.

179 Shan dynasty : in this section, 'Shan dynasty' seems to apply to both local Tais and Thais from Ayutthaya. The latter are mostly nameless throughout the book apart from Bya Rama Thon and his son in the 1530s. For residents of Tenasserim's isolated villages, the turbulent drama of Thai politics was probably irrelevant (and remains so today). Whether the lords were princes in 1531, warriors like Naresuan in 1590, or kings like Narai the Great in 1687, the only salient point was that they were foreign 'Shans' from across the mountains. If anything, the people's primary loyalty (or fear) may have been to the *Okya Tanao-si*, a viceroy who was likely native to the province and thus entrenched in its personal networks.

zedis in many regions ranging from the old town of Thawara to Myeik township. According to hearsay, an old Karen man was told in a dream that a Buddha statue was buried at one of these sites. Local people went to the spot and dug up the ground but found nothing. The next day, the old man received more communication in another dream. This time, people made a thorough search along the path and found a glittering object in the shape of a mushroom protruding about one inch above the ground. When they excavated the ground with an adze, they discovered a gold Buddha statue just over one foot high. The Buddha image was kept for public homage.

There were two ordination halls in Shwe Htote town, but those buildings were built and consecrated through coordination and cooperation with the Zedawun Sayadaw and the abbot of Htan-taung Monastery in Shwe Htote, and not by Shan monks. For the knowledge of new generations, the two monks sculpted a smooth marble slab one *taung* thick and four *taung* wide. They carved inscriptions on the slab in collaboration with the Shan governor. The inscriptions detail the establishment of towns and villages, construction of phayas, and consecration of ordination halls throughout the Shan dynasty. It was written in mixed languages of Kyay Ganang, Du Ganang and Shan, and the location of enshrined religious objects was written in code in case greedy, immoral men broke into the phaya to steal the valuable objects in the future.[180]

During the establishment of Myeik, its founders built a zedi on top of Khe Hill. It was thirty-two *taung* high with a plinth that was eighteen *taung* wide.[181]

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180 Kyay Ganang, Du Ganang: likely meaning Kadu and Ganan, which are Sino-Tibetan languages in the Luish family. Luce thought they were once spread widely over northern Burma (Luce 1985); ethnic speakers still inhabit the Sagaing region. 'Kyay' could also refer to an archaic system of writing numbers. The marble slab with these inscriptions has not been found. [NS/JP]

181 Zedi on top of Khe Hill : 32 *taung* (about 15 meters) by 18 *taung* (about 8 meters). The monument was renovated and expanded several times, notably in 1785 when it received the name Laykyunsimi. For a detailed history of the site, please see: *A Brief History of Theindawgyi Phaya*, by U Paduma (in Burmese 1970; English translation 2021).

Sa-tein Sayadaw Bhaddanta Zagara, together with the Shan kings and governor who established Myeik, constructed an ordination hall on the hill which housed his cloister. Near this ordination hall, a phaya was built. And in the precinct of the phaya and ordination hall, a Buddha statue was enshrined along with statues of the monkey Hanuman, two large monkey brothers named Sukjit and Pali, and a marble slab with religious inscriptions.

The cloister of Sa-tein Sayadaw Bhaddanta Zagara, which was built soon after the establishment of the town, was called Tawya Monastery. It is now at the center of the town which has expanded over time.[182]

Soon after Myeik was established, many first settlers invited their familiar monks to the town. They built monasteries in suitable places and donated them to the monks. Ashae Kyaung did not yet exist when the town was built. From the top of Khe Hill, one could see that this monastery laid atop the eastern hill, so it was called Ashae Kyaung.[183] Another monastery was built with monetary donations from many lay people. Therefore, it was known as Wut Taik Kyaung.[184]

In those days, phayas and zedis were only built on top of hills and mountains. There were just five monasteries in town : four inside and one outside. Shwe Kyaung, Ashae Kyaung, Min Kyaung and Wut Taik Kyaung were all located within the city walls. Phaya Kaing Kyaung, though, was a Shan monastery built outside the city after the establishment of the town by Shan kings.

Only later did the number of monasteries increase as the town enjoyed prosperity and more people came to settle there. Inspired by growing faith in Buddhism, the local residents built many more kyaungs in Myeik.

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182 Tawya Kyaung : literally meaning 'countryside monastery', it is now well within the urban area of modern, bustling Myeik at GPS 12.436, 98.60. Usually shortened to Taw Kyaung, it has become a pilgrimage site for Thais [TKK/JP].

183 Ashae Kyaung : 'east monastery'; GPS 12.438, 98.6

184 Wut Taik Kyaung: in Burmese the name meaning 'lay person's monastery', as *phaya-wut* (ဘုရားဝတ်) means 'Buddhist lay people' (or 'worship'). However, *wut* suggests a Tai origin as well, perhaps as simple as 'Wat Tai' : 'Tai Temple' (**วัดไท**, or ວັດໄທ in Lao). It overlooks the harbor from GPS 12.436, 98.595.

18

Buddha statues submerge in the river[185]

According to the ancestors' records, when British authorities entered Myeik township in 1186 ME, the Buddha statue of Byassadi Raja at Wut Sin fell off the altar and into the river on its own.[186] Another record says that in 1257 ME, missionary monk Shar Pyar asked one of his disciples to move an alabaster Buddha statue that was one-*taung* high.[187] The disciple tied the statue tightly with rattan and carried it to a nearby lake to convey it by raft. Suddenly, of its own accord, the statue came loose from its bindings and fell into the water. Then he tied rattan even more tightly around a second Buddha statue and tried to convey it. But the second statue also came loose from its bindings and submerged in the lake, the same as the first.

Sometime later, an old Karen man and his family were rowing down the river. They suddenly saw a bronze Buddha statue emanating a fairly bright light from a distance of about 60 *taung*.[188] They also witnessed two alabaster Buddha statues sitting on either thigh of the bronze Buddha statue. Another Karen person saw these three images as well. The news spread to the people of Tanintharyi township, but when they went to the lake to look, they saw nothing but darkness reigning supreme across the water.

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185 Note that this section about a British era event was moved to re-establish chronological order. In U Gyi Sein's 1929 version, it was the first paragraph of the previous chapter on Buddhism during the Shan dynasty.

186 British authorities entered Myeik Township in 1186 ME : troops under the British East India Company stormed Myeik on 6 October 1824 CE. Buddha images are said to express displeasure with worldly events like this by moving on their own volition.

187 1257 ME / 1895 CE.

ONE TAUNG = approximately 46 centimeters, or one cubit.

188 60 TAUNG : about 27 meters.

19

Summary

A dynasty of thirty-five kings[189] ruled the royal capital of Tanintharyi for 254 years. It began with King Eekadeh Raja who founded the town, and ended in 893 ME during the reign of King Kyauk Bwa, the last king of the dynasty.[190] In that year, King Bya Rama Thon, the son of the king known as the Lord of One Million Elephants from Siam, marched with armed forces to occupy the capital of Tanintharyi.[191] He reigned for four years. Then, as he was a man of Lang Xang Shan origin, King Bya Rama Thon returned to Siam and left his son Bya Ram-saw on the throne.[192] [193]

During the time of Bya Ram-saw, Dawei, Ye and Mawlamyine seceded from Tanintharyi. In [910] ME[194] after King Bya Ram-saw had

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189 Thirty-five kings : chapter 11 gives the number of kings as fifty-three.

190 King Kyauk Bwa : another name for King Oh-daung.

191 King Bya Rama Thon (ဗျရာမသွန်) : as noted in chapter eleven, this person is unidentified but was possibly a son of Ramathibodi II (r. 1491–1529). This invasion of Tāṇa-sirī does not appear in Thai records, perhaps due to the damage they suffered over time such as the sack of Ayutthaya in 1767.

192 Lang Xang Shan origin : meaning Tai-speaking people from the Laos region. The kingdom of 'Lan Xang Hom Khao' endured from 1353 to 1707 (Stuart-Fox 1998), but has been seldom studied. It had complicated relations with the Thais which may explain certain references in the *yazawin*. For example, *lan xang* (ล้านช้าง) literally means 'million elephants'.

Chris Baker offers an interesting hypothesis that if Bya Rama Thon was a son of Ramathibodi II, then he may have been born while his grandfather Trailok (r. 1448–88) ruled Siam from Phitsanulok, and perhaps his mother belonged to the northern Thai elite (personal comm.).

193 Bya Ram-saw : ဗျရံစော : if the note above is true, then this ruler was a grandson of Ramathibodi II and great grandson of Trailok. His name resembles Phra Ramesuan, a traditional title for princes in Ayutthaya (*ibid*.) The name could also be transliterated as 'Bjaramso' [TKK].

194 [910] ME : Sein's text has 900 ME, or 1538 CE which does not correspond with other dates and sources. For example, Sein wrote that Bya Ram-saw's father ruled Tenasserim for four years after 893, and the son ruled a further thirteen years. More importantly, the 'occupation' by Hanthawaddy began in 910 ME (1548 CE) as attested by numerous sources (Twin-thin, *Yazawin Thit* [*cont*.]

ruled Tanintharyi for thirteen years, the king of Hanthawaddy marched in command of armed forces and occupied both Tanintharyi and Ayoedaya.[195] The demise of this ruler was followed by secession of the two states. In 925 ME, King Hsinbyushin occupied Tanintharyi and Ayoedaya again.[196] In the fifth year of his reign, the two states again seceded. In 931 ME, the king took the two states back under his control.[197]

After his death, his son who had built five phayas succeeded to the throne.[198] During his reign, the two states rose in rebellion and seceded again. From that time on, Tanintharyi had no king. Successive Shan kings who ruled from Ayoedaya appointed governors to Tanintharyi instead.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK

[*cont*.] 1998, v.2, pp. *c*, 59–78 Salarak 1933, p. 88; Damrong 2001). A conflict between Bago and Ayutthaya did occur in 1538, but was confined to the Martaban area (Damrong 2001, p. 65; Wyatt 1982, p. 90).

195 KING OF HANTHAWADDY : Tabinshweti (r. 1531–50), who hailed from Toungoo but seized the Hanthawaddy capital of Bago in 1538, and the rest of its kingdom by 1541. Despite later assumptions (*eg*. Chutintaranond 1999, pp. 114–16), his military operations against Siam in 1548 did not extend further south than Dawei. The risk was unnecessary because he gained the customs revenue of Tanao-si in a negotiated truce. (Twin-thin, *Yazawin Thit* 1998, v.2, pp. c, 59–78, 121–5. Also: Pamaree 2005, p. 91, citing U Kala, *Mahayazawin*, 1960, v.2, p. 235.).

196 KING HSINBYUSHIN : Bayinnaung (r. 1551–81). After Tabinshweti's death in 1548, Bago's authority in Tenasserim may have been nominal. By 1554, the southernmost Burmese outpost was at Ye (Damrong 2001, citing *Hmannan*, v.2, p. 204). In 1563–4 Bayinnaung restored command of Marit's customs revenue (Twin-thin 1998, v.2, pp. 121–5; Salarak 1908, p. 28; U Kala 1960, v.2, p. 352; Damrong 2001, p. 41). We don't have evidence showing Tenasserim was invaded at this time, but Bayinnaung's armies were three to four times larger than those of his predecessor (Pamaree 2005, p. 84). It seems possible that some troops were sent to protect his southern flank. He also appointed administrators in the province, though he probably retained its local ruler (*ibid*, pp. 91–96). It is important to understand that the change of kings may not have mattered or even been noticed by the majority of Tenasserim's population.

197 931 ME, THE KING : Bayinnaung again, during the 3rd Siege of Ayutthaya in 1569.

198 HIS SON : Nandabayin (r. 1581–99).

Third Book

20

King Alaung Mintaya U Aung Zeya's military march to Ayoedaya

In 1121 ME, King Alaung Mintaya U Aung Zeya began a military march to Ayoedaya.[199] When he reached Dawei, the Shan mayor of Palaw heard the news and did not dare to stay. So he moved to Mareik where he sought an alliance with the town's mayor. When King Alaung Mintaya got to Tha-moke village, the two mayors dared not stay in Mareik and fled to Tanintharyi.[200] Then the two Shan mayors made an alliance with the governor of Tanintharyi, and the armed forces were put on high alert.[201]

After conquering Mareik, Alaung Mintaya U Aung Zeya renamed the town Myeik. Then the king marched again and quickly occupied Tanintharyi township,[202] which caused the three Shan authorities of Tanintharyi, Mareik and Palaw to flee to Tharlin.[203]

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199 1121 ME / 1759 CE : The *Royal Orders of Burma* show that Alaungpaya's campaign in Tenasserim was planned in September of 1759. Dawei likely fell to his troops around 25 December (Than Tun, vol. 3, pp. 56–65).

200 Tha-moke village : twenty km north-northeast of Myeik at GPS 12.576, 98.719.

201 Mayor / governor : Sein's text calls all of these officials *myowun*, a Burmese term that does not always translate into a single word in Thai. Therefore the present text includes distinctions that reflect political differences between the *ok-phra* of towns like Palaw and Marit and the *Okya Tanao-si* based in the provincial capital of Tanao-si. The former were functionaries. The latter had enormous power equivalent to a viceroy.

202 Conquering Mareik ... Tanintharyi Township : advance troops reached Mergui around 19 January 1760 and captured it around 6 February. Tanao-si was likely occupied a few weeks later, though Alaungpaya himself did not reach the old capital until 9 March 1760 (Than Tun, vol. 3, pp. xxxii, 71–6).

203 Tharlin : previously named as the southeastern limit of the autonomous [*cont.*]

Through swift attacks, Alaung Mintaya U Aung Zeya took control of small and large towns one after another around Ayoedaya. Upon arrival at the capital, the king stationed his regiments in a position north of the city in Ban Naung Ohn Tun.[204] The Shan governors, military officers and troops stayed within the city walls with the king of Ayoedaya; they dared not leave the town to fight the war.[205]

King Alaung Mintaya U Aung Zeya soon became ill. Together with the prince and military commanders, he left Ban Naung Ohn Tun for the royal capital on Thursday, the third waxing of Kason in 1122 ME. On the way home, the troops were temporarily stationed at Kyaykin village, Mottama township. The king succumbed to his serious illness there on the twelfth waning of Kason (11 May), a Sunday, in the same year. The commanders then garrisoned 2,000 troops and minister Hla Shwe Taung in Myeik, Tanintharyi Province.

[*cont*.] kingdom of Tāṇa-sirī; this possibly means the ancient town of 'Jalinga' on the upper Theinkun River (near GPS 11.86, 99.48; see note 81). The flight of Thai officials in 1760 lends credence to this identification because it would have been the next town on the primary escape route to Siam. Also see the map of Arthur Kerr, who walked through the Theinkun Valley in 1933 and identified the site before it was destroyed by mining operations (Kerr 1933).

204 BAN NAUNG OHN TUN : unidentified; the name does not correspond to Thai records which said Burmese camps north of the city were at Ban Kum and Pho Sam Ton. In JSS 11/3 (1915), Luang Salarak suggested it was **บ้านตืน** : Ban Tuen.

205 SWIFT ATTACKS : though not in the *yazawin*, Alaungpaya had to overcome stout resistance at Kui prior to approaching Ayutthaya. On 8 March 1760, orders were sent to Burmese commanders to halt their advance troops. The army was then reorganized and ordered to attack Kui the same day, but apparently the town did not fall until the 16th. In contrast, Phetchaburi fell quickly on the 22nd despite needing several days to bring artillery against the fortified city (Than Tun, *Royal Orders of Burma*, vol. 3, pp. 74–79). Details are not given, but it is difficult to imagine that an army built for speed of attack would halt for a week unless it met a stiff defense. [JP] Note, however, that the *Konbaungset* suggests the advance was delayed because Alaungpaya fell ill in Kui (Mg. Mg. Tin 2020, v.1, pp. 233–247) [NS]. Possibly both were true.

Thai chronicles describe grim details of catastrophe at Kui. One says that 5,000 men were sent to confront the Burmese. While encamped, the force under Phraya Yommarat was routed along with its reinforcements. Thai soldiers then "fell in great numbers and the rest chased each other down [*cont*.]

21

ESTABLISHMENT OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES BY SONS AND GRANDSONS OF KING ALAUNG MINTAYA

King Alaung Mintaya was succeeded by his son, Naungdaw Phayagyi.[206] During the first two years of his reign, he did not appoint a governor to Tanintharyi. Meanwhile, a man named Nga Sat Che rebelled against the king, hand in glove with unscrupulous men of the township. In the end, Nga Sat Che was executed.

In 1122 ME Alaung Mintaya's eldest son, the crown prince who had established Zeya Pura Sagaing, recalled Min Hla Shwe Taung and some of the troops who were garrisoned in the town. They returned to the royal capital.[207]

[*cont*.] into the sea. Some drowned and some were devoured by fish. Few were those who escaped [to tell the tale]." (Cushman 2000, pp. 476–8).

Prince Damrong concurs that despite initial success by "men skilled in charms and incantations," the Thai forces lost badly: "In the royal history it is stated that when Phraya Rattanathibet knew that the forces under Phraya Yommarat had been defeated, he sent a force of 500 men to the assistance of Khun Rong Palat Chu but this reinforcement did not arrive in time. Khun Rong Palat Chu fought the Burmese from early morning up to noon when he and his men became exhausted. The Burmese received reinforcements, surrounded and captured Khun Rong Palat Chu. His men were defeated and dispersed. The Burmese chased them and there were many who were drowned in the sea." (Damrong 2001, p. 303).

These descriptions accord with local beliefs in Kuiburi, which are detailed in a fine book about its history and culture (Chuan Em-Ot 2013, pp. 61, 108–9). The town also recreated a small fort to depict the battle. Next to it stands a large mound of debris. However, this is not wreckage from Burmese destruction in 1760, but rather from a Thai scorched-earth policy in preparation for Hsinbyushin's attack in 1766. Orders came from Phetchaburi to evacuate and destroy the place, the order was duly carried out, and by 1768 Kui was *lom salai*, 'ruined' (*ibid.*, p. 18). [JP]

206 NAUNGDAW PHAYAGYI : Naungdawgyi (r. 1760–63).

207 REBELLION AND RECALL : these events indicate the ancient capital was abandoned. Its occupation by Myanmar was very likely impossible militarily and logistically. Thenceforward, Myeik became the primary city of Tenasserim.

Bala Kyaw Htin was then appointed myowun of Tanintharyi. He established a neighborhood called Chaung Gyi Yet where he settled people whom he brought from Chaung Gyi Phyar.[208] The area where people from Chaung Nge Phyar were accommodated was called Chaung Nge.[209] The myowun ruled the town justly.

22

Myeik township established by a Myanmar king

In 1123 ME, U Dein Kyaw was appointed mayor of Mareik. On the fifth waning of Tagu in the same year, he launched a master plan to upgrade the town. A royal order was issued to build a town wall that would be 1,138 *tar* long and made of logs.[210] Construction would begin around one p.m. on the seventh waning of Thadingyut in 1124 ME.[211] The name 'Mareik' would be annulled at the same time, then upgraded to a

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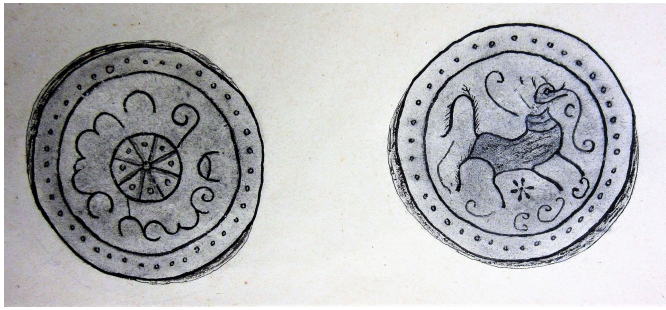
208 Chaung Gyi Phyar : meaning 'edge or end point of the big river'. The location seems to refer to far northern parts of the Greater Tenasserim River. [PHY] This action may have been forced relocation to capture the population, which was a common strategy of war in Burma and Siam. [JP]

209 Chaung Nge Pyar : the southern stretch of the Lesser Tenasserim River. Some maps locate it specifically near GPS 11.77, 99.19.

210 Town walls, 1124 ME (1762 CE) : 1,138 *tar* (ᘐᘐ) is about 3.64 km. See Appendix 7.

211 Note that this chronology of an unbroken succession of Myeik *myowuns* from 1760 to 1767 conflicts with Thai chronicles and Dutch records. These strongly imply that Ayutthaya regained some control of Marit and Tanao-si until the former was wrested away by the Burmese in 1765. In fact, the Dutch reported from Ayutthaya that the English repeatedly asked King Ekkathat for permission to build a trading lodge at Mergui in late 1763 and early 1765. Shortly afterwards the Burmese invaded the region again, destroyed its cities, and massacred the people according to Dutch intelligence. The Bamars retreated before the rainy season of 1765, then returned in the dry season. By the end of year they had permanently dislodged Thai authority in Mergui. (Cushman 2000, pp. 490–3. And: GM deel 14 : p. 377/VOC 3069, ff. 1569v–1570r; pp. 684, 694/VOC 3102, ff. 2920v–2921r & ff. 2969r–v; pp. 769–770 VOC 3128, ff. 1258v–1258v; pp. 769–770/VOC 3128, ff. 1258v–1258v). [*cont*.]

township named Myeik. Myowun U Dein Kyaw signed the order and erected a marble slab that detailed the process of establishing the new town. During his seven-year command, the mayor also renovated the zedi of the phaya on Khe Hill for the first time.



reverse and obverse of Tò coin, Tenasserim, c. 1800; drawing by Arthur Phayre, c. 1860; cataloged by Kris van den Cruyce (2023) as type VC 401.3

[*cont*.] The VOC records are credible, and their chronology conforms to logistical realities. Alaungpaya's successor, Naungdawgyi, had to contend with serious domestic unrest throughout his reign (1760–1763). He would have been hard-pressed to summon forces for an occupation of distant Tenasserim. His successor, Hsinbyushin, was a much stronger and more aggressive ruler who finally sacked Ayutthaya in 1767. His invasion of the far south may have been a prelude to that ultimate aim. However, it remains unclear how these events resulted in the chronology of Myeik myowuns in the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. Perhaps control of the town oscillated between the two sides between 1760 and 1765. Perhaps its people returned to a form of autonomy in the absence of a clear ruler, while the Thais and Burmese appointed governors who served in name only. Strangely, the *Royal Orders of Burma* do not appear to mention Myeik at all between 1760 and 1787. [JP]

After 1765, logistical problems persisted for both sides. The Thais likely had a loose grip on the interior, while Ava held the stockade of Myeik as a kind of Burmese military colony [NS]. Its influence quickly disappeared outside the town walls, but it did establish Myanmar's administrative presence in new territory (despite the presence of Burmese-speakers in Tenasserim for at least a thousand years). For local inhabitants including native Tais, Bamar military governors were preferred over Thai raiders who abducted, relocated and enslaved Tenasserim's people until 1824, when the practice was extensively documented in IOR/H/MISC/663 and other British records. [JP]

23

King Hsinbyushin

In 1125 ME the second son of King Alaung Mintaya succeeded to the throne after his elder brother. In 1126 ME the new king received the title of Thiri Dhamma Yaza and established a new royal capital at Yadana Pura, instead of the royal capital of Zeya Pura which had been founded by his elder sibling.[212] This sovereign was known as King Hsinbyushin, Lord of the White Elephant. By his order from the royal capital of Ava at Yadana Pura, armed forces under the command of General Khema Yaza, along with armed forces commanded by General Bala Kyaw Htin and the people of Myeik under the authority of Myowun U Dein Kyaw, were required to prepare themselves for attack on Ayoedaya. The same year, General Maha Nawrahta was also dispatched to Myeik in order to launch attacks on Ayoedaya.

It took three years for the generals to finally occupy Dwayawaddy and Ayoedaya where they captured the Shan king in 1129 ME.[213] In recognition of the victory, Tanintharyi Myowun Bala Kyaw Htin, was given promotion and assigned to remain in Tanintharyi. U Dein Kyaw, who had governed Myeik for seven years, was brought back to the royal capital.

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212 Thiri Dhamma Yaza : Hsinbyushin (r. 1763–76), formally called Thiri Thuriya Dhamma Razadhipati Hsinbyushin. His capital of Yadana Pura was near Mandalay at Innwa (Ava), to where Hsinbyushin moved the seat of government in Nov. 1764. His beleaguered older brother had kept the capital at Zeyapura in Sagaing, the ancestral homeland of the Konbaung Dynasty.

213 Occupation of Dwayawaddy and Ayoedaya : after a siege of more than a year, Ayutthaya was sacked on 7 April 1767. Burmese troops then burned it to the ground—possibly including irreplaceable materials about the history of Tanintharyi. Regarding Ekkathat, the last king of Ayutthaya, a Thai chronicle states that he fled into the woods where "His Holiness starved all by Himself. The Burmese were not able to capture Him at all, but did manage to capture all of the Holy Royal and Constantly Lineal Lineage and took Them to be kept in each and every stockade." (Cushman 2000, p. 521) Royal hostages included Prince Uthumpon, who had abdicated the throne to Ekkathat in 1758.

24

ADMINISTRATION IN MYEIK BY MYOWUN KHEMA YAZA

During his reign, King Hsinbyushin appointed Khema Yaza as mayor of Myeik in 1130 ME. After four years in charge, he resumed renovation of the Khe Hill phaya originally built by Shan kings.

In compliance with King Hsinbyushin's order to rebuild Myeik,[214] Mayor Khema Yaza brought local people from Pin Oh village and Kyaukpya village at the mouth of the Myit Nge River to the residential area which was later named Myit Nge Yet. He also established Myitma Yet for people from Taung Pi-lar of Pakok Mountain. That neighborhood is now called Thandok Thayin Kan. He also founded Nauklae Yet for those from Tawnauklae. The people now living in Nauklae are genuine descendants of the old capital at Shwe Htote.

The ward created for those from Mottama was known as Talai Su, and the center of Myeik was called Alel Htein Zaydan Yet or Zaygyi, meaning 'Big Market Quarter'. The ward close to the market was known as Zay Gaung Yet.

The ward for Pathis from India was called Kan Gaung Yet;[215] the neighborhood for those brought from Sadein Bokpyin was Sadein Yet;[216] and the place to where people were brought from sandy islands in the sea was called Kathae Su.[217] The ward for residents from Palauk, Palaw and Pala along the northern coast was known as Dawei Su.

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214 ORDER TO REBUILD MYEIK : many of these designations repeat those made earlier during the first founding of Marit in 1531. Possibly, this only meant that Thai names were replaced with Burmese names, the same as Marit became Myeik. Wards and their origins are mapped in Appendix 7.

215 PATHIS FROM INDIA : Muslims, generally meaning those of Indian descent.

216 SADEIN BOKPYIN : earlier in the text, Sat-tein meant Sa-tein Taung near Tanintharyi. Here it refers to an area north of Bokpyin that is labeled 'Sadein' on most maps. Soon after British occupation, Commissioner A.D. Maingy established a refuge for Malay people there. The village still exists at GPS 11.385, 98.70. Presumably, the people brought to Myeik were also Malay.

217 KATHAE : *ka* + *thae* (ကသဲ), roughly meaning 'of sand'. [my gratitude to PHY who realized the word's distinction from the Burmese term for Meitei]. R.C. Temple reported that Moken living in the Doun Archipelago called themselves [*cont.*]

To officially confirm the organization of the town, a meeting was held between local authorities, eight counselors and thirteen community elders of the township. They paid respects to the Three Gems of Buddhism at 1 p.m. on Saturday, the first waxing of Tawthalin, 1132.[218]

They invited twelve venerable monks to recite *parittas* and *kammavacas*.[219] After the rites, the merits gained were shared with all the gods and celestial beings around the universe including mythical creatures like dragons, galones, gonbans, yeikkhas, gandhabbas, Mani Mekhala, and guardian spirits of the earth, waters, forests, mountains, villages, towns, townships and districts.[220]

[*cont*.] 'Kathay Salone' (Temple 1897). Jacques Ivanoff confirms that 'Kathè' and 'Pathè' are obsolete Burmese words for the Moken (Ivanoff 1999, p. 2). Regarding Kathae Su, however, I am skeptical that anyone could have forced the Moken to settle in a specific place, least of all a town. These maritime nomads successfully (and wisely) eluded settlement until very recently. The first British commissioner of Mergui reported in 1825 that the Moken were impossible to catch because "they will always easily evade our gun boats by lowering their sails and pulling to windward." (Burma, *Selected Correspondence* 1928, p. 56). On the other hand, some Moken visited the town to trade and wait out the rainy season. Therefore, the demographics of Kathae Su may have been fluid and complex, perhaps including Moken, Mons, Malays, Tais and Karens who had settled in the islands.

In any case, there is no evidence that 'Kathae' meant Meitei, or descendants of people from Manipur who are called *Kathei* elsewhere in Myanmar. Some Meitei certainly came to Tenasserim, but not as residents of Kathae Su.

The editor must also apologize for a previous book (Potter 2016) in which he equated Moken with 'saleeters' who marauded European sailors. This assertion was copied from Maurice Collis, but upon further study it is not supported. Captain Alexander Hamilton gave the game away in his detailed 18th century account of sailing in the East Indies. To him and other Europeans, 'saleeters' meant any unfriendly brown man in a boat (Hamilton 1744, v.2, pp. 67, 158, 402). Others made the same racist assumption (*eg.* DeCoutre 1595/2013, p. 77). In fact, the shy Moken were usually victims of this aggression than its perpetrators, as Dr. Helfer discovered during his explorations of the Mergui Archipelago (Helfer, *Report on the Islands*, 19 Jan. & 24–26 Feb. 1839).

218 First waxing of Tawthalin, 1132 me : c. September 1770 ce

219 Parittas : Buddhist texts seeking protection, blessing or to give reverence.
Kammavacas : texts regarding the rituals of monastic life.

220 Galones: half-man/half-bird creatures also known as garudas. [*cont*.]

A stake was driven into the ground at the center of the place chosen for construction of the royal offices. Twenty *taung* from the stake at each of the four corners, four large glazed pots were buried, each containing about 400 *peittha* of sesame oil.[221] Ten pavilions of different sizes were built. Meals were offered to the monks as well as all the merchants who came from the four corners of the country for three consecutive days. During this three-day period, the township received a constant stream of cargo boats and ships and traders from near and far. Miraculously, many species of birds from other regions flew into the township; peacocks spread their wings and danced, doves sang and roosters crowed. Animals wandered into the township as if it were their natural habitat. In accordance with vows that were made, twelve morsels of cooked rice of different colors were put on top of the omen pole.[222] Crows then carried these rice morsels away instead of eating them. The eight counselors deduced that this was a good omen and were delighted to see that the town had been completed with the Eight Characteristics of a city.[223]

After governing Myeik for four years, Khema Yaza returned to the royal capital. During the period between 1134 and 1139 ME, Myeik was under the direction of Mayor Ottama Kyaw, and subsequently under

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GONBANS : ogres.

YEIKKHAS : though elsewhere described as guardian or nature spirits, in Tanintharyi tradition they are often ogres.

GANDHABBAS : heavenly musicians who sometimes descend to earth as messengers or muses.

MANI MEKHALA : guardian goddess of the seas.

221 TWENTY TAUNG : nine meters.

400 PEITTHA : about 640 kilograms.

222 OMEN POLE : နိမိတ်တိုင် : the meaning is not clear, but may be something like a 'forecast pole' placed within towns during their founding. People believed it would indicate if continued construction was auspicious or not. [NS]

223 EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF A CITY : see the *yazaniti*, or lists of supplementary information which appeared in some editions of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin* (p. 114). This said a city required seven characteristics, variously including a king, ministers, allies, warehouses full of jewels and rice seedlings, fortifications, moats and walls, gates and pillars, lands outside the city, soldiers, etc.

Ne Min Myo Khaung. In the meantime, King Hsinbyushin brought the Sa-tein Sayadaw to Ava and conferred upon him the title of Gunha Saradhaja Maha Yaza Guru, because he was well-known for his great wisdom. The monk requested consecration of a plot of land on Khe Hill in Myeik, which became Batta Ordination Hall.[224]

Remark : according to historical records compiled in successive periods, Sa-tein Sayadaw Zagara strictly observed the precepts and was endowed with probity and great wisdom. He therefore became a household name around the country. Hearing about the venerable monk's good reputation, King Hsinbyushin of Ava promptly conveyed the monk to the palace and conferred upon him the title of Gunha Saradhaja Maha Dhamma Yaza Guru. Legends say that the monk mentioned that his day of birth was a Monday, and therefore the title was Gunha Saradhaja. In the monarchical periods, successive kings conferred titles on monks according to their days of birth. For instance, the title Oggam Sabhika Vidhaja was conferred on monks who were born on a Sunday, and Nanda Malabhi Kavidhaja on those born on a Saturday. If U Zagara's day of birth had been Tuesday, the title conferred on him would have been Jagarabhi Kavidhaja. Considering the title 'Gunha Saradhaja', his day of birth might have been Monday. It is up to the readers to decide whether U Zagara's day of birth is Monday or Tuesday.

224 Sa-tein Sayadaw U Zagara : note that this monk shares a name with a previous Sa-tein *sayadaw*, U Zagara from the 16th century. The earlier monk was present at the town's founding in 893 ME, while the latter was involved in the establishment of Laykyunsimi Pagoda in 1093 ME (U Paduma 1970). Some local scholars believe the earlier monk was actually Ashin Yuttaung. [NS] Conflation of the names of the two *sayadaws* may have contributed to confusion about the year of Myeik's founding (*ie*., 893 vs. 1093 ME. Please see notes 43 & 268) [JP].

25

The Myowun also known as Htaw Gyi

In 1140 ME, Khaw Htaw Gyi was appointed mayor of Myeik. During his governance, at 3 p.m. on the full moon day of Nadaw in 1140 ME (Monday), an ordination hall was consecrated by one hundred venerable monks including Myeik missionary monk Gunha Saradhaja Naga Maha Dhamma Yaza Guru, title recipient, and venerable monks Kontiñña, Puppa, Phala, Yevata and Sobhita. Subsequently, Khaw Htaw Gyi was recalled to the royal capital.

26

Establishment of Amarapura by King Bodawpaya

In 1143 ME, King Thadoe Min Saw under the title Thiri Sudhamma Yaza succeeded his father and elder brother as monarch.[225] He was also known as King Padon, or Bodawpaya, because he had been the mayor of Padon town before taking the throne. In 1144, he established his palace in a new city called Amarapura. Under his royal order in 1145, three hundred and twenty golden Buddha images were created simultaneously, one for each town across Myanmar. The image for Myeik was placed on top of a hill near the city's eastern gate.[226]

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225 King Thadoe Min Saw : Bodawpaya (r. 1782–1819), whose regnal name was Siripavaratilokapaṇḍita Mahādhammarājadhirāja. Note that this chapter was moved to restore chronological order.

226 320 golden Buddha images : Naing Soe comments: "King Badon (Bodawpaya, r. 1782–1819) donated 320 golden stupas around the country as landmarks of his territory. In Myeik, there are two named as golden stupas (ရွှေဂူ : *shwegu*). One is at Theindawgyi and the other is near Min Kyaung on Taw Kyaung Hill." This event also appears in the *Konbaungset* chronicle (Maung Maung Tin 2020, book 1, pp. 389–99).

Inspired by a strong desire to promote and propagate the *Buddha Sasana*, Bodawpaya sent missions of five monks and a set of *Pitikat*[227] to every district and township. Venerable Monk Gunha Saradhaja Maha Yaza Guru of Myeik, Tanintharyi Province, received five missionary monks on the fifth waxing of First Waso in 1147 ME.[228] At that time, [future] myowun Pe-taungza had been appointed as civil officer responsible for propitiating the spirits.[229] The venerable monks re-consecrated the ordination hall near the phaya on Khe Hill for the promotion and propagation of the *Sasana*. The ordination hall had been initially consecrated by local monks in 1137 at the request of Mayor Khema Yaza.

While the ordination hall was being consecrated, Ottama Yaza Thingyan Pyanchi Thay Na Kyaw Htin was appointed deputy commander of a thousand-man regiment. The commander at the time was Min Khaung Kyaw. The two generals in charge of these armed forces marched to Ayoedaya and occupied it. After the victory, the troops returned to the royal capital.[230]

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227 PITIKAT : also called the Tipitaka, or Three Baskets of Buddhist scriptures.

228 FIFTH WAXING OF FIRST WASO IN 1147 ME : ca. July 1785 CE

229 PE-TAUNGZA, 1147 ME : Sein's text regarding this man is confusing. In this chapter, he is only a religious officer in Myeik, not its mayor. Consequently, calling him a 'future myowun' here, then moving the separate chapter on his governance of Myeik (1174/5 to 1178 ME) to its proper chronological place seems to be the only way to reconcile the text with its dates. Dissatisfied readers may wish to refer to Sein's original from 1929 text to form their own opinion. [JP]

230 INVASION OF AYOEDAYA, 1785 CE : this was the 'Nine Armies War' against Siam, by then governed from Bangkok. For the defenders, it was so catastrophic that much of the country from Chiang Mai to Nakhon Si Thammarat was depopulated for decades afterwards. However, the *yazawin*'s claim of a Myanmar victory is fictional; even Burmese chronicles admit it was a military disaster. Numerous Thai cities were destroyed, but Bodawpaya's main force was defeated near Kanchanaburi largely due to logistical failures. The Thai capital was never really threatened. Myanmar troops—almost half of whom may have been Shan levies—were nearly wiped out in retreat with over 40% never reaching home. (Salarak 1917; Koenig 1990, p. 20, 33–35, 61–2; Than Tun, Royal Orders of Burma pt. 5, p. xvii).

For concurring Thai perspectives, see : *The Royal Autograph Chronicle* (1952), v.2, pp. 235–56; and: Chaophraya Thiphakorawong (1979), pp. 87–118. Battles did not occur in Tenasserim, but an English translation of the [*cont*.]

27

APPOINTMENT OF TANINTHARYI MYOWUN BALA KYAW HTIN AS MYEIK MYOWUN WITH THE TITLE OF NAYMYO NAWRAHTA

In 1147 ME, Tanintharyi mayor Bala Kyaw Htin was appointed mayor of Myeik with the title of Naymyo Nawrahta.[231] Under his governance, members of the *Sangha* under the patronage of Venerable Monk Gunha Saradhaja Maha Dhamma Yaza Guru held a meeting with other dignitaries to upgrade the zedi on Khe Hill. The project was launched at one p.m. on the fourth waxing of Tazaungmon in 1147 ME. Upon completion of this major upgrade, the zedi was renamed Laykyunsimi Zedi-dawgyi.[232] Afterwards, Mayor Naymyo Nawrahta was recalled to the royal capital and promoted to the rank of governor.

[*cont*.] latter chronicle says: "From Mergui, an advance [Myanmar] guard consisting of 2,500 men was placed under Nemyokhungnarak and officers Natmilaeng, Paettongcha, Paloengbo, Natchakkibo, and Tongphayungbo. It was to advance by way of Mergui to attack Chumphon and Chaiya. Kaengwunmaengyi was given command of a support force consisting of 4,500 men, which was to follow. From here also a naval force of 3,000 men was conscripted under the command of Yiwun and officers Bawachiang, Waengyingdecha, and Bokinyo to attack Thalang [Phuket]. Counting both land and sea forces, the total number of men came to 10,000. With Kaengwunmaengyi as commander in chief, they were to attack the southwestern provinces." (*ibid*., p. 87).

231 NAYMYO NAWRAHTA : in the *Konbaungset*, this commander led forces against Siam via Martaban during the 1785 invasion (Maung Maung Tin 2020, v.2, pp. 34–35). However, Thai chronicles suggest he campaigned south of Myeik (see note 230). Either way, his career fits a pattern in which military officers also served as myowuns of Myeik. One could argue, therefore, that Myeik under the Konbaung kings was more a military colony or isolated outpost than a settled, administered province. Despite the fall of Ayutthaya, Myanmar's actual power in the province only extended a few miles outside the town's stockade due to the presence of hostile Thais and Malays. [NS/JP]

232 LAYKYUNSIMI ZEDI-DAWGYI, FOUNDED ON THE FOURTH WAXING OF TAZAUNGMON 1147 ME : meaning 'four islands oil lamp', now popularly called Theindawgyi; c. November 1785 CE (U Paduma 1970).

[*The following myowuns—Theinga Nawyatha and Maha Thiri Thihathu—did not appear in U Gyi Sein's* yazawin. *They appear in the* Royal Orders of Burma, *however, for which reason they are listed here. Research by Naing Soe.*]

Myeik Myowun Theinga Nawyatha

The date of Naymyo Nawrahta's recall is uncertain, but it seems unlikely that he was still in Myeik when an unnamed mayor was mentioned in a royal order dated 3 July 1149 ME (1787 CE). This said: "Gilt one-third of the exterior decoration and leave two-thirds red on a *zayat* built near an old pagoda in Ywathit Gyi, now repaired by the wife of the Beit [Myeik] myowun".[233] Promoting Buddhism was a duty of town officers and their wives under Burmese kings of the Konbaung dynasty, even on its remote periphery. A subsequent order seems to identify the mayor as Theinga Nawyatha. Dated 28 October 1787, this states : "Shwe Daung Byan shall go to Beit to collect property animate and inanimate left by his father Theinga Nawyatha, myowun in Beit;" [234]

The reasons and date of the father's departure from office are unknown. However, the same order hints at discord with other officials in Myeik and Dawei. It commands that they "... shall make no hinderance whatsoever while [the son] is collecting his father's property."

Ywathit Gyi was a place outside the Myeik city stockade as established by the town plan of 1762.

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233 Than Tun, *Royal Orders of Burma*, pt. 4, p. 145.
Zayat : a rest house for that also served ceremonial functions.
Beit : ဘိတ် : a pronunciation of Myeik; but also a corrupted synonym of ဖိတ် : *peit*, meaning 'last, extremity' in Burmese. This may allude to the town's position at the farthest reach of Myanmar, according to Kyaw Din (JBRS 1917; reprinted in Appendix 1 of this book).

234 Than Tun, *Royal Orders of Burma*, pt. 4, p. 187.

Myeik Myowun Maha Thiri Thihathu

The new governor of the region was appointed by an order dated 2 October 1787 CE (1149 ME), which said: "Pyan Chi Thuya, former Officer of Tavoy should be dismissed from his office. Maha Thiri Thiha Thuya shall take charge of Dawei, Beit and Tanintharyi."

It was a significant break from past practice to give command of the entire region to one man. At the same time, it continued the appointments of military generals as high officials in Tenasserim. The *Konbaungset* said Maha Thiri Thiha Thuya had led an army in the doomed 1785 war.[235] Then an order dated 19 August 1787 commanded joint forces for another attack on Siam through Martaban. This said, "1,356 horsemen shall be armed with guns from Beit and Dawei under Maha Thiri Thihathu, and he shall march by the Bi Lauk Da Yaik route to capture the Thai city [Bangkok?]. … Maha Thiri Thihathu shall remain at Dawei and collect provisions to be sent after the advancing forces".[236]

[*resuming U Gyi Sein's text*]

235 U Maung Maung Tin, *Konbaungset* 2020, ch. 2, pp. 34–35.

236 Than Tun, *Royal Orders of Burma*, pt. 4, p. 165.

28

APPOINTMENT OF BAGAN MAYOR MANI CINDA AS MYEIK MYOWUN

In 1150 ME, the mayor of Bagan, Mani Cinda, was appointed mayor of Myeik. In consultation with community elders, he had a monastery built on the mountain to the east of town. This monastery was called Ashae Kyaung Monastery, and was donated to Venerable Monk U Panña Siri.

Mani Cinda served as mayor for three years and then was transferred to Mottama with the same rank.

obverse of Tò coin, Tenasserim, c. 1800.
Drawing by Arthur Phayre, c. 1860.
Cataloged by Kris van den Cruyce (2023) as type VC 411.2
The 'Toe-Naya' was described by Maung Htin Aung
as a 'Burmese unicorn'.

29

APPOINTMENT OF NARA THAMAN KYAW AS MYEIK MYOWUN IN THE REIGN OF KING BODAWPAYA

King Bodawpaya appointed Nara Thaman Kyaw as the next mayor of Myeik. During his governance, the Shan prince who was governor of Sone Phyone raided down the river with six boats carrying 130 Shans.[237] They captured all the Myanmar men and women they found in the villages, including Sandawut village and Peinnhe-taung village to the east of Myeik. Then they held the victims hostage on their boats.[238]

Knowing that the Shan governor had captured many local people and held them captive in Phaya Kaing Creek near Myeik, the Myeik myowun commanded his armed forces to attack the invaders. The Shan governor-prince from Sone Phyone fled into a tributary of the creek with his followers. Then, Burmese armed forces on ten military boats blocked the mouth of the tributary day and night.

The Shan prince did not dare enter the main creek. So, his forces dug a new canal that was 30 *alan*[239] in length, and escaped through a nearby tributary. When the mayor of Myeik discovered this, he ordered his army to pursue them but they were too late. Then the Myanmar side

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237 SHAN PRINCE WHO WAS GOVERNOR OF SONE PHYONE : in this case, 'Shan' refers to Thais who reorganized in Thonburi and Bangkok after the destruction of Ayutthaya. This particular incursion probably occurred between 1788 and 1792 but does not seem to have been recorded in the Thai chronicles. 'Sone Phyone' : စုံဖြုန်း is likely Suan Phueng (สวนผึ้ง : 'honey bee garden'), meaning the 'Shan prince' may have governed Ratchaburi Province. The place also appears in the *Konbaungset* as ဆွန်းဖြုန်း, which U Maung Maung Tin identifies as 'Suan Phung'. Burmese troops marched through the district from Dawei to Ayutthaya in 1765 (Maung Maung Tin 2020, v.2, p. 34). Note also that Nara Thaman Kyaw was another military commander who later served as Myeik myowun. He accompanied Bodaypaya's son during the 1792 invasion of Siam (*ibid*, pp. 66–73) [My thanks to Naing Soe for finding these connections.]

238 SANDAWUT : GPS 12.476, 98.675. PEINNHE-TAUNG : GPS 12.384, 98.718.

239 30 ALAN : one *alan* (အလံ) is about 90 cm, so the canal was about 27 meters.

demanded that the Shan prince return the victims he had abducted to Sone Phyone. The prince did so. The tributary where they had dug a canal and escaped was later known as Kon Phauk Chaung.[240] [241]

Myowun Nara Thaman Kyaw had a religious site built to the east of Myeik Taung. This included a statue depicting the Buddha's attainment of Nirvana at Ingyin Garden of the Mala Kings in Kusinarum. Since

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240 Kon Phauk Chaung : ကုန်းဖောက်ချောင်း : literally, 'making earth-hole creek.'

120-Taung : 55 meters. The location of this short waterway is uncertain. Phaya Kaing Creek begins around GPS 12.448, 98.616 and winds southwest for 3.5 km; the Shan escape route might now be submerged under development [JP].

241 Abducted : Between 1760 and 1825, Thai forces abducted thousands of people from Tenasserim. Most became agricultural slaves, many never returned home, and the population of the province declined to just 10,000 inhabitants. Forced relocations were common in Southeast Asian history; they acquired valuable manpower while denying resources to enemies. Arguably, they were also a substitute for military occupations which were beyond the logistical abilities of almost all Southeast Asian polities. However, the terror, scale and duration of raids during the early Bangkok period may have surpassed all others. They were worsened by Bodawpaya's relentless attacks during which Myanmar troops plundered any civilians who remained (Crawfurd 1830, v.2 p. 151; & 1834, v.2 p. 264; Low 1835, p. 256; & 1837, p. 324; Butler 1884, p. 5; Burma, *Selected Correspondence* 1928, pp. 3, 6, 17, 50 et al.; Koenig 1990; also see Pawakapan 2014 & 2017 for similar raids in the Mekong region).

A nominal treaty between Bangkok and Ava in 1793 (see note 243) meant little for Tenasserim's rural people who were robbed and enslaved without pause. Even British occupation was no guarantee of safety. During his explorations of 1825, James Low was shadowed by Thai troops and witnessed the terror of villagers (Low 1839, pp. 216–34). Anthony Maingy, the first commissioner of Mergui, commented in the same year: "It would be impossible to describe the distress and misery occasioned by the depredations of the Siamese since our conquest of Mergui; not a village a few miles distant from the stockade has escaped, and at least 1,600 of the inhabitants have been carried away. Every village in the interior is deserted and scarcely a trading boat is to be seen." (Burma, *Selected Correspondence* 1928, p. 3).

Slave raiding was a deliberate strategy called *ti kha* (ตีข้า), and Thailand used it against all its neighbors during the early Bangkok period. Therefore, officers in Tenasserim were likely given the same orders that King Rama III gave to Chao Phraya Bodin in the east : "You are to figure out a means of returning Cambodia to Bangkok as it used to be. If this is not possible, [*cont*.]

then, it has been known as Kusinarum Kyaung. Every year on the full moon day of Kason, the Kusinarum Kyaung Festival has been held on a grand scale.[242]

The mayor also had an ordination hall built near the phaya. Once its construction was completed, he was recalled to the royal capital within the same year.

[*cont*.] you should turn Cambodia into a forest, only the land, the mountains, the rivers, and the canals are to be left. You are to carry off Khmer families to be resettled in Thai territory, do not leave any behind. It would be good to treat Cambodia as we did Vientiane." (Pawakapan 2017, p. 38). Over time, the military strategy became a business. Thai elites and the nation itself accrued massive benefits from the labor of enslaved victims (*ibid.*, pp. 2–4, 17–21.)

(Please note that historians employ euphemisms to gloss over this brutal slavery and human trafficking. I suspect they wish to avoid giving offense to their hosts, but in light of recent tragedies, their failure to call out historical practices *when they still occur today* is unacceptable.)

As the scale of the abductions became clear, British diplomacy and force-of-arms largely suppressed them. For example, in April 1825 a naval detachment under Lt. Drever fought off a large force of Thai slavers in the southern islands. The raiders said they were following the orders of their government (Wilson 1827, pp. 158–60). Another detachment blocked Thai incursions down the rivers (Burma, *Selected Correspondence* 1928, p. 50–51). Henry Burney adamantly included the return of captives during long negotiations with Bangkok (Hall 1974, pp. 40–45, 57–58). The *Government Gazette* of 1827 published a detailed account of one such repatriation in which Mr. Leal led Myanmars on a long walk home from Nakhon Si Thammarat, up the coast to Prachuap, then over the old trade road to Mergui. Most of them survived, but not all. (Wilson 1827, appendix, pp. lxxiii–lxxvii. Also: Anderson 1890-a, Appendix A, pp. 391–402).

Despite these efforts, people of Tenasserim remained traumatized long afterwards. As late as 1839 Dr. Helfer found a countryside that was almost entirely depopulated, and communities who still lived in grave fear (Helfer 2019 [IOR/F/4/1926/82649], 18 Dec. 1838, 25 Jan. 1839). During his visit to Kraburi, abducted slaves even begged Helfer to save them from bondage, but he was powerless to intervene (*ibid*., 12–14 April 1839).

242 Ingyin Garden, Kusinarum : this likely refers to the grove of sal trees (*Shorea robusta*) at Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh where the Buddha passed away.

Kusinarum Kyaung : a number of monasteries use this name, but the *yazawin* refers to the one at GPS 12.435, 98.626 (PHY, and Thidar 2007, p. 5).

30

APPOINTMENT OF SITT RACHI AS MYEIK MYOWUN

In 1154 ME, Sitt Rachi was appointed mayor. At that time, a struggle occurred between the myowuns of Dawei and Mottama. Kalein Aung Sar, the mayor of Dawei went to the king of Ayoedaya to report on the conflict. In response, the crown prince of Ayoedaya set off with his troops on a military march to Dawei. The Shan crown prince then deployed 1,000 soldiers on top of Patit Mountain in the port of Myeik and launched artillery attacks on the town's urban areas.[243]

Myeik Myowun Sitt Rachi and his forces showed great resilience against the violent assault, and urgently sent a messenger to King Bodawpaya in the royal capital of Amarapura. The king promptly appointed Minister Thadoe Maha Thiha Thura as general, who marched

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243 CROWN PRINCE OF AYOEDAYA : in 1154 ME (1792 CE), the formidable Thai *uparaja* was Maha Sura Singhanat (1744–1803; also called Krom Phraratchawang Bawon Sathanmongkhon). As the younger brother of the king, he had long fought against Burmese and other foes including twice defeating the forces of Bodawpaya in 1785–6.

The Chakri chronicles largely confirm the *yazawin*'s version of events but add more details (Chaophraya Thiphakorawong [1979], pp. 177–199). The most important was Singhanat's realization that Dawei was logistically indefensible. As a seasoned warrior, he advised his brother to abduct its people, throw its buildings into the river brick by brick, then abandon the place permanently. Having come to that conclusion, a Thai future for Myeik and Tanintharyi became very unlikely as well (*ibid.*, p. 281).

Rama I admonished his brother for the suggestion, but a year later in 1793 Bangkok and Amarapura agreed on a detente that ceded the Tenasserim Coast to the Burmese (Symes 1800, pp. 96–98). Effectively this was only an agreement between kings to forego the massive invasions that had devastated their countries. Border raids and guerrilla warfare continued, and a limited war erupted in Phuket in 1809–11 (Koenig 1990, p. 21; Skinner 1985). Nonetheless, major fighting ended with the border roughly in its current position. Therefore, the *uparaja*'s decision in 1792 was a seminal event for Tenasserim.

These events are also in the *Hmannan* chronicle which names the Thai prince as 'Paya Peikthalok' and the Myeik myowun as 'Settya-u-chi' (Salarak 1917, pp. 43–51). Also see: *The Royal Autograph Chronicle* (1952), v.2, pp. 332–51.

with 20,000 troops to the battlefield.[244] The general launched a fierce attack on the invaders who were resisting in Dawei. The troops of the Shan prince suffered heavy casualties. In the end, the intruders had no choice but to hastily withdraw from Dawei to save their lives.

The 20,000 troops from the royal capital, led by General Maha Thiha Thura, were reinforced with 10,000 troops from Dawei. This 30,000-strong army marched to Myeik. With a fleet of combat boats they proceeded from Talai Su to Patit Mountain, which the Shan prince and his troops were defending. But then the Shan troops fled and managed to escape.

General Maha Thadoe Thura stayed in Myeik for a short period. He conferred the title of Thinkha Zeya Kyaw on Mayor Sitt Rachi. Later the mayor was recalled to the royal capital and promoted. He was then posted to another township.

31

APPOINTMENT OF PE-TAUNGZA AS MYEIK MYOWUN

Up to that time, a total of ten mayors had been appointed over twenty-five years. Pe-taungza was next. He was appointed myowun of Myeik in 1175 ME.[245]

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244 THADOE MAHA THIHA THURA : the *Royal Orders of Burma* confirm his appointment : "7 April 1788 : (1) Leave 2,000 men in the defenses of Dawei, 5,000 men in Madama [Martaban] and send back to the capital the rest of the armed men who have had titles or recognition for their bravery. (2) The above order is amendable in an emergency; then they go to add the strength of Beit [Myeik] and Dawei under Maha Thiha Thu[ra]." (Twin-thin, v.5, p. 58).

245 PE-TAUNGZA, 1175 ME (1813 CE) : his name means 'governor of the place called Pe-taung' [TKK]. It is unclear when he served there, and his roles through the years were both extensive and confusing. Chapter 26 mentions him as a religious official in Myeik in 1785 CE. Much later, the *Konbaungset* named him as part of an armed reconnaissance unit that ranged through the Tenasserim region in 1792–3 (Maung Maung Tin 2020, v.2, pp. 66–73) [NS]. A separate list at the end of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin* also has Pe-taungza serving an initial term as Myeik myowun from 1798 to 1806 (see p. 86). Additionally, the first two sentences of this opening paragraph cannot be reconciled with other [*cont.*]

During his governance, there was a break in the dam that had existed since the time of the Shan kings. Therefore a new reservoir was built by damming the creek named Kin Chaung in the north of the township. Wild plants and bushes around the site had to be cleared for its construction. During this work, children recited a rhyme for fun as they played :

Kan haung buyaut loh
kan theit paw
Pe-taung ko daw
pyone see pyone see

The old dam disappears
a new one appears
and Mr. Pe-taung
is smiling, smiling.

On a day chosen as auspicious, the project was launched. Just then, a pair of peacocks flew to the worksite and danced with their wings spread. Recognizing the unusual event, the mayor was very happy and ordered the reservoir to be built in the shape of a peacock. Upon completion, the lake was known as Pe-taung May-yay-kan.[246] He also built and donated a monastery in the east of the township, which is still known today as Min Kyaung. During his governance, Pan Min Ye Hla Kyaw Khaung of Myeik built a phaya on Theindawgyi Taung.[247] It was named Shwegu Phaya.

[*cont*.] dates and should probably be ignored. Note that his chapter was originally placed earlier in the text and not in chronological order. Dissatisfied readers can refer to the Burmese original. [JP]

246 PE-TAUNG MAY-YAY-KAN : 'Mayor Pe-taung Lake', created in 1177 ME (1815 CE). This seems to be the reservoir now called Kangyi at GPS 12.446, 98.600. British engineering projects show that it as a disused swamp in the 1920s. It had also lost its former peacock shape. ("Quarterly report on seawall foreshore, 1926" and "Report on Mergui Seawall, 1931." MNA files 1/7-1217, and 1/7-1248).

247 PAN MIN YE HLA KYAW KHAUNG : apparently a private citizen of Myeik. Theindawgyi Taung is identical to Khe Hill.

The backstory of the creek named Wann Gyi Shin Ma is that long ago a heavily pregnant woman passed away. The dead body was carried by boat along a watercourse to the cemetery for burial. Later, the watercourse was known as Wann Gyi Shin Ma Chaung.[248] In 1177 ME, the mayor and people built another huge reservoir there. After the creek had been dammed for use as a water supply, they built a phaya to the west of it. The ward covering Kin Chaung and Wann Gyi Shin Ma Chaung behind the dam was then known as Kangyi, or 'big lake'.[249]

As mayor, Pe-taungza governed Myeik for three years.

32

APPOINTMENT OF MIN HLA KYAW AS MYEIK MYOWUN

In 1178 ME, Min Hla Kyaw was appointed myowun of Myeik. At the same time, Zeya Nawrahta was made revenue minister and artillery commander in order to safeguard Myeik from enemies. The mayor had a phaya built on top of Law Hill, while the revenue minister had a phaya built on top of Wut Taik Hill. The mayor was later recalled to the royal capital and promoted.[250]

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248 WANN GYI SHIN MA CHAUNG : literally, 'heavily pregnant woman creek'.

249 KANGYI WARD : located just west of the lake. The creek Wann Gyi Shin Ma Chaung no longer seems to exist due to land reclamation. Given the elevated ground to the east and south of Kangyi, a fresh watercourse could only have come from the north. Indeed, conforming to the story, a town plan from 1939 shows a former Burmese burial ground at GPS 12.454, 98.603 ("Key Map" 1939).

250 MIN HLA KYAW : According to the *Konbaungset*, on 1 May 1815 Min Hla Kyaw and customs officer Panchi Zayya Nawyahta were sent to India to collect *Pitakat* (Buddhist scripts) and *Lawkikyan* (social laws and methods). They returned to the capital on 4 September 1817 (Maung Maung Tin 2020, v.2, pp. 146, 149) [NS]. As Myeik myowun, however, the date of his tenure was 1178 ME/ 1816 CE, which is problematic unless he sailed back from India via Myeik and governed there for a year. This could have been planned in advance, but there is an equal chance that he was forced to the far south by contrary winds and a poor vessel [JP].

33

APPOINTMENT OF MIN YAN KU AS MYEIK MYOWUN

In 1178 ME, Min Yan Ku was appointed mayor of Myeik. He built a bridge in Dawei Su, so the bridge was named after him.[251] He served as mayor for three years.

34

APPOINTMENT OF U MYAT LAY AS MYEIK MYOWUN AND THE ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH

In 1181 ME, U Myat Lay was appointed myowun of Myeik.[252] He built five phayas northeast of the township. Now the area is called Phaya Ngazu, or 'Five Pagoda Plain'. Additionally, he built a prayer hall on Wut Taik Hill. He also built a phaya known as Buu Phaya Zedi where sacred relics were enshrined in the reliquary.[253] Furthermore, at his own expense he built a bridge across Wet Gaung Creek in Nauklae Ward. The bridge was known as Wet Gaung Bridge. In 1183, a *hti-daw* or ornamental umbrella was hoisted atop Buu Phaya. U Myat Lay served as mayor for five years, during which time Ananda Kyaw Swar was appointed commander of the artillery unit.

In 1181 ME, King Thadoe Min Saw, grandson of King Bodawpaya, held a consecration event. This king was also known as King Sagaing because he had been mayor of Sagaing before coming to the throne. During his reign, the king heard news that British forces with forty warships had launched attacks on Hanthawaddy and Yangon in the month of Wagaung, 1186 ME. Therefore, the king sent a messenger to Mayor U Myat Lay in Myeik, ordering him to prepare sixty-four heavy and small

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251 BRIDGE : the Burmese word (တံတား : *tah-da*) can also mean jetty or pier. Its location and use here are uncertain.

252 1181 ME : 1819 CE

253 BUU PHAYA ZEDI : GPS 12.436, 98.595

cannons along with a thousand guns from the De Wun Arsenal in case British naval forces attacked Myeik.[254] Having received the order, the mayor demolished Seik Nge Ward and built a strong crenellation with thirty-five small cannons. He also set up more than thirty heavy cannons in the area from the monastery hill to Buu Phaya on Wut Taik Kyaung Hill.[255]

On the mayor's orders, a man of the *pu-ta-kit* race named Roshin made preparations with *bayingyi* men in the township to test the artillery.[256] Then, local residents in Tanintharyi were called up to join Myeik's military defense. A monk named Khin Gyi Boe of Tanintharyi Monastery called for residents to defy the order. Therefore, government troops occupied the monastery and disrobed him. Together with a Tanintharyi clerk named Nga Myat Lay, the monk Khin Gyi Boe was executed on the embankment of the central lake in Myeik.

Similarly, the royal order also summoned residents of Palaw to military service, but they refused to go along with the recruiters. Eventually, troops opened fire into the crowds. Every man and woman they found was abducted to Myeik.

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254 British forces : the First Anglo-Burmese War formally began on 5 March 1824 ce (1186 me). Technically, the war was conducted by the East India Company, but by then the distinction between crown and company was often difficult to discern, even to the British.

255 Monastery hill : meaning Khe Hill. British commander Lt. Col. Miles reported: "More than common attention had been paid in arranging the defence of the place and the natural strength of the ground gave the greatest advantage to them. Their batteries were placed on the brows of different hills, commanding the shipping completely. From the best information I have been able to collect, the enemy had 3,500 men in arms." Apparently the defenders did not have enough artillery to defend Pataw-Patit Island as well (ior/h/misc/663, pp. 689–94; also Appendix 4 of this book).

256 Pu-ta-kit race named Roshin : 'pu-ta-kit' : ပူတကစ်, meaning Portuguese [ns]. The surname 'Roshin' (or 'Rawshin') might correspond to 'Rosa' or 'Rocha'. See Appendix 3 for further details on this man.

Bayingyi : Europeans, especially those of Portuguese descent who had long served as mercenaries in Southeast Asia. Others were forced to serve after being captured.

While mayors in Tanintharyi region were making preparations to defend against the British intruders, British troops invaded Dawei. Waterways Minister Maung Dar[257] of Dawei rose up in rebellion against the royal capital, captured Dawei Myowun U Shwe Toke, and handed him over to British authorities. Hearing the news, Myeik Myowun U Myat Lay ordered his troops to fight the British invaders and apprehend Maung Dar for his betrayal of the king. Then, 1,000 troops and thirty combat boats sailed up the channel from Myeik to Dawei. When they reached Mali-lay Island,[258] they received information that British troops were approaching Myeik with four warships. So, Mayor U Myat Lay promptly returned from the island to Myeik with his thousand-man regiment and thirty combat boats.

Upon arrival, the mayor sat down together with Naval Minister Maung Boe, Deputy Commander Ko Shwe Kyar, Deputy Commander Mote Sate, Revenue Minister Maung Myat Yar, Customs Minister Maung Yauk, clerks Maung Taw, Maung Pein and Maung Mhoun, messenger Maung Loke, other administrative officials, and the heads of Satein, Dawei Su, Myitnge, Alel Kyun and Nauklae wards.

According to the resolutions passed in this meeting, the *bayingyi* unit had to fire twenty-five artillery shells, while the township mayor of Phaya-taung, clerk Maung Pein and Sayar Htut Oo would each fire five artillery shells. Maung Shwe Kyar was assigned to fire shells from the crenellation between Seik Nge Yay Nar and Nauklae Wet Gaung. Under the command of Captain Maung Myat Yar, 300 civilians armed with 300 guns were divided into four units with seventy-five men in each unit. They were stationed on the monastery hill. All officers were assigned respective duties and put in a stand-by position.

At about 8 a.m. on the ninth waxing of Thadingyut, 1186 ME, four warships under the command of a British major on military march

257 WATERWAYS MINISTER MAUNG DAR : a few years later in 1829, this same man led a rebellion against the British in Dawei (*Asiatic Journal*, Jan.–April 1830, pp. 193–6). He came close to succeeding, but in the end 'Moung-da' and other leaders were captured and executed. Perhaps he had hoped that the rebellion would redeem his treason, and King Bagyidaw might excuse him and his family from certain death. Also see: IOR/H/MISC/676, pp. 223–40; Boardman 1830.

258 MALI-LAY ISLAND : Tavoy Island or Mali Kyun.

arrived near the port of the coal factory. They ordered Dawei resident Maung Khwe Phyu to hold a flag and take a message from the captain of the warships to Myeik Myowun U Myat Lay. The message was read out loud to the authorities of Myeik.[259]

The message said that Waterways Minister Maung Dar had handed over Dawei to the British, and in return British authorities had rewarded Maung Dar and his family. Minister Maung Dar's son, Maung Shwe Pu, had also recruited 500 men from Dawei who accompanied the British army. The message warned mayor Maung Myat Lay that he needed to reply as soon as possible whether or not he would hand over Myeik to the British Empire. After reading the message, U Myat Lay ordered his troops to send the flag back to the British troops, and asked Captain Nga Ywe to imprison Maung Khwe Phyu outside the town.

About 9 a.m., British naval forces began deploying their warships. One went to Kyauktada, another to Yaysee-dwin, and two warships went to Tadagyi.[260] Military officers reported that they would have to open artillery fire before the British warships were in position. Mayor U Myat Lay said the troops would open fire on his order only. Then the mayor sat under the shade of two golden umbrellas, keeping an eye on movements along the watercourse.

At 10 a.m. sharp, the artillery regiment fired the Yan Pon Khwin and Myolone Chantha cannons.[261] Then the remaining cannons, both heavy and small, opened fire simultaneously. The British warships returned

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259 Ninth waxing of Thadingyut, 1186 me : according to ior/h/misc/663, pp. 689–694, the assault happened on 6 October 1824. The British officer in command was Lt. Col. Miles, whose report is transcribed in Appendix 4. Also see Appendix 3 for a slightly different Myanmar version.

260 Kyauktada, Yaysee-dwin, Tadagyi : the locations are not precisely known today, and the Burmese word *tah-da* (တံတား) can mean bridge, jetty or pier. Locals believe Kyauktada ('stone jetty') was in Seik Nge quarter near the Catholic church; Yaysee-dwin ('catchment basin') may refer to a reservoir near Kalwin at gps 12.456, 98.603; Tadagyi ('big pier') could have been in the southern part of town around Nauklae [ns/tkk].

261 Yan Pon Khwin and Myolone Chantha cannons : the names mean 'conquering the enemy' and 'prosperity and stability of the country', respectively [tkk]. The former one appears to be the same cannon now located on the grounds of Mandalay Palace [ns].

fire, and after three hours the exchange of artillery shrouded the entire township in clouds of gunsmoke. As a result, the two sides could no longer see each other. About 2 p.m., local authorities suggested to Myowun U Myat Lay that he move to another place to resume the attack. The mayor ordered them to move only after firing one more round. Then the gunners continued firing until receiving further orders. The artillery units on the Myanmar side scored many hits on the British warships, whereas the British artillery units in the river could hardly hit their targets because of the tall hill that shielded the Myanmar forces.

Having fought for long hours and with darkness approaching, the mayor ordered a cease-fire. He said they would resume the attack the following morning. U Myat Lay announced he was going home and told his troops not to worry. He asked to be informed only if the Dawei residents marched on land. The mayor then returned to his house.

Because the Myanmar side halted its artillery attacks, British troops approached the shore on lifeboats. They entered the port at the coal depot. The Hlay-ka-taung unit under command of Captain Maung Shan Phyu fought back against the invaders. The British soldiers and a company of Myanmar soldiers soon locked horns in a huge battle at Funeral Gate.[262] The attackers then withdrew and waited for reinforcements.

Fate, however, was on the side of the British. All of a sudden it rained heavily, and once the guns and cannons of the Myanmar troops got wet, they no longer functioned. Then the British soldiers charged the Myanmar line, but the defenders fought back with swords and spears, and the British side suffered nearly a hundred casualties.[263]

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262 Funeral Gate : မသာတံခါးဝ : *ma tha tanhkarwa*. It was listed above as the fifth gate in the town plan established by the Thais in 1531. Please see note 113 and the map in Appendix 7, p. 176.

263 Casualties : the British action report tells a different story, though some details like the initial Myanmar artillery and rainstorm agree. Nonetheless, Lt. Col. Miles said it was over in little more than an hour despite "heavy and well-directed" cannon-fire from the defenders. He reported six men killed, twenty-four men injured, and one missing "bheastie." It would have been extremely difficult for a British officer to fabricate a casualty list. Please see Appendix 4.

As the British troops attacked the defensive line, a messenger was sent to Myowun U Myat Lay with a report on the situation. He got upset because he had not been informed earlier. The mayor, his son Maung Maung, and his sword-carrier Maung Lay rushed to Funeral Gate to reinforce the troops.

British soldiers had set up ladders against the walls at the gate. In response, the defenders hit down at the enemy relentlessly with swords. Then Myanmar forces heavily attacked a British unit in the garden of Myitnge Ward. The enemy could not resist the assault and fled for their lives. Seeing that their comrades had successfully repulsed the enemy, other Myanmar troops made counterattacks at the gate.

Unfortunately, the heavy Yan Pon Khwin cannon on the top of Khe Hill broke one of its support legs and ceased functioning. When informed about this, the mayor ordered his troops to strike the British soldiers as they climbed up their ladders, so the Myanmar soldiers vigorously attacked their enemy with swords.

On the battlefield at the foot of Ashae Monastery Hill, Myanmar troops under command of the mayor fought against about a thousand British troops. Unfortunately, the defenders were outgunned by British weaponry. This caused the Myanmar side to suffer high casualties. Although Mayor U Myat Lay led the troops from the front line, his forces fell back as the enemies advanced.

Ye, Dawei and Tanintharyi are coastal towns that get heavy rainfall during the rainy season. On the fourteenth waxing of Thadingyut, the rain came down in torrents and soaked the Myanmar guns and cannons.[264] Because their heavy and small weapons were made useless, the

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264 RAIN ... SOAKED THE MYANMAR GUNS AND CANNON : presumably it rained on both sides, though Furnivall's source said the British were sheltered by the town wall (Appendix 3). The guns used by Myanmar forces are uncertain but may have been archaic or even home-made muskets. Lt. Col. Miles' report even lists six blunderbusses among the captured arms (Appendix 6). East India Company troops probably had India Pattern 'Brown Bess' rifles. These muzzle-loading flintlocks were standard issue for over a hundred years until around 1850. They used cartridges rather than loose powder, and infantrymen could nearly double their rate of fire by striking the rifle butt on the ground to seat the firing load rather than jamming it down with rods.

defenders suffered serious losses. The weapons at that time were not as lethal as those today. To open fire, gunners had to pour gunpowder into the barrels and pack it in with wooden rods. Therefore, the majority of the Myanmar soldiers were armed with swords, spears, and bows-and-arrows. Myowun U Myat Lay and his troops defended incessantly against the invaders, but there was a significant gap in weaponry and warfare between the two sides. At last, the Myanmar side could no longer resist, and over 3,000 troops had to retreat from the town. Myowun U Myat Lay fled with them to Myeik Taung, and later went into hiding in the village of Kalwin.[265]

Four days after the devastation of the town, at 5.30 p.m. on the fourteenth waxing of Thadingyut, 1186 ME, U Myat Lay informed a British officer that he wished to enter Myeik. Two British officers came to escort the mayor into town.

After the British made investigations within the fortress and discovered that Tax Minister Roshin and *bayingyi* soldiers had attacked them with cannon, these men were held captive in the brig of the warship. Upon seeing them in the cells, U Myat Lay asked the British officers to release them because he, who had actually ordered the cannon attack, was now himself in custody. His request was fulfilled. The British officers set free all forty-seven Myanmar prisoners of war. They took U Myat Lay and his family to Bengal and put them under house arrest. Later they were brought back to the town of Martaban, still under house arrest though provided with a pension.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK

265 MYEIK TAUNG : this could refer either to the hill or the ward around it. [NNC].
KALWIN : 3 km north of of Myeik.

Fourth Book

35

Different Narratives

In [893] ME during the time of Dwayawaddy kings, an island was named after the horse-hitching post, and it was known as Mareik Island in the Shan language. A new town was established as a seaport, and Shan Pashu people appointed Pharama as mayor.[266] In 1119 ME, the ninetieth king of the dynasty appointed Paliche Pa-daung as mayor.[267] Two years later in 1121 ME, King Alaung Mintaya U Aung Zeya made a military march to Myeik and conquered the Tanintharyi region. Since then, the province has been under the rule of successive Myanmar kings. The dynasty of nine Shan kings had ruled the region for [228] years.[268]

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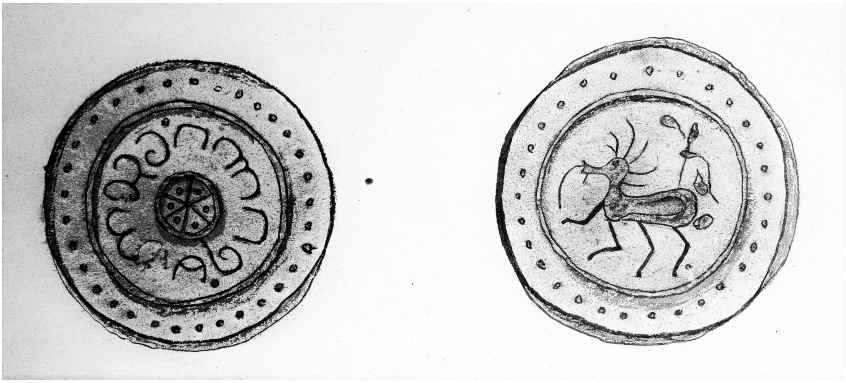
266 Shan Pashu appointed Pharama : see note 5 for more on the meaning of 'Shan Pashu', which likely means Tais *and* Malays. Its use here implies that local people resumed autonomy in the 1530s. The name 'Pharama' (ဖရာမ, which could also be 'Pha-ra-man' or 'Pha-ya-ma') is unidentified. It might correspond to 'Phra Rama' (**พระรามา**), but that seems too lordly a name for a small town mayor. It could also be a Persian name such as Fariman (فريمان), as Iranians had a long history of administrative authority under Ayutthaya including positions in Tenasserim (Pombejra 2016; Marcinkowski 2002; Baker & Phongpaichit 2017, pp. 125–127).

267 Paliche Pa-daung : ပလီချောင်ဒေါင်း : unidentified

268 [893] [228] : Sein's text has '1093' here, which is directly contradicted in chapters 11 and 19 and by other versions of Tanintharyi's chronicles. Furthermore, 1093 ME is 1731 CE, by which time a huge number of sources show that for most of the previous two centuries 'Marit' had been under Thai rule (*ie*., 'Dwayawaddy kings'). Even from the erroneous date, Sein somehow calculated the duration of Thai rule as 73 years instead of 28 (which has been replaced here with 228 years from 893 ME). It is also unexplained why his paragraph has both nine and ninety 'Shan' kings. Neither corresponds to anything known about Thai monarchs. Kyaw Din's version in JBRS 1917 has nine kings, [*cont*.]



reverse and obverse of Tò coin, Tenasserim, c. 1800.
Drawing by Arthur Phayre, c. 1860.
Cataloged by Kris van den Cruyce (2023) as type VC 400

[*cont.*] and the year 900 ME (1538 CE) for the beginning of Thai rule (see Appendix 1). U Paduma's version has 893 ME for the initial Thai invasion, then 1048 ME (1686 CE) for a second occupation. The latter date is untenable due voluminous European sources, though it does give a clue about the strange figure of 73 years (1686 + 73 = 1759). U Paduma also says there were "nine successive Shan myowuns" during that second period.

It is possible that some confusion on the dates arose because there were two important *sayadaws* named U Zagara. One was at the town's founding in 893 ME; the other oversaw construction of Laykyunsimi Zedi, the town's most important monument, in 1093 ME (U Paduma 2021, p. 7). Perhaps their names and deeds were mixed together.

Of course, U Gyi Sein may have faithfully copied the dates from disparate parabaiks. Alternatively, biased or sloppy transcribers may have wrongly reported them, the writing could have been illegible, the parabaiks damaged, or maybe the typesetter made errors. But regardless of the cause, there is no credible debate about the fact that they're wrong. Scholars of the *yazawin* in Tanintharyi simply ignore them.

Though the editor desires to faithfully reproduce Sein's text, it serves no purpose to perpetuate clear errors which local people know are wrong. Merely relegating corrections to footnotes is inadequate, prone to further confusion, and disrespectful of local knowledge. Therefore I have placed the suggested dates in brackets, explained the decision in detail, and uploaded a facsimile copy and digital transcription of the Burmese original for anyone to draw their own conclusions. (https://archive.org/details/u-gyi-sein-myeik-yazawin-c.-1929; https://archive.org/details/ugs-tni-yazawin-tyepscript).

36

the dynasty established by King Alaung Mintaya, who ascended the throne in 1113 myanmar era

the reign of eleven kings of the Konbaung Dynasty

Year (ce)	Royal Title	Childhood Name	Length of Reign
1753[269]	Alaung Mintayagyi	U Aung Zeya	8 years
1760	Naungdawgyi	Maung Laik	3 years
1763	Hsinbyushin	Maung Ywa	13 years
1776	Singu	Maung Ye Hla	5 years
1781	Maung Maung	Maung Maung	7 days
1781	Bodawpaya	Maung Waing	38 years
1819	Bagyidaw	Maung Sein	18 years
1837	Tharawaddy	Maung Khin	9 years
1846	Pagan	Maung Htaung	7 years
1853	Mindon	Maung Lwin	25 years
1878	Thibaw	Maung Yay Set	7 years

269 Ascension of Alaungpaya : most sources say this king was crowned in 1752.

37

PROFILE OF KING THIBAW, THE LAST KING OF THE KONBAUNG DYNASTY

He was born on the twelfth waxing of Nadaw, 1220 ME (Saturday). He succeeded to the throne in the royal capital of Mandalay at the age of nineteen years and nine months. At the age of twenty-six years and ten months, on the eighth waxing of Tazaungmone, 1247 ME, he was captured by British colonialists and sent into exile in India. He passed away at midnight on the sixth waxing of Nadaw, 1277 ME (Friday), in Yadana Giri. The Konbaung Dynasty from Alaung Mintaya to Thibaw had lasted for 140 years.

Remark: In various historical records, the dynasty is said to have spanned a period of 140 years. But according to the author's calculation, it was only 133 years and seven days. It is up to the reader to decide.

38

THE FUTURE DEVASTATION OF MYEIK

According to a prediction of the Buddha and a prophecy of the eight wise men, the larger river will disappear and the smaller one will appear.[270] Shar Gyi will disappear and Shar Nge will appear.[271] The township will flourish only after the *gaungbaung-gyi* and copper *hti* have arrived.[272] Five phayas will arise northeast of the town, while great

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270 EIGHT WISE MEN : referred to as eight counselors earlier in the chapter about Myowun Khema Yaza [TKK].

LARGER AND SMALLER RIVERS : meaning all rivers in the region, not just the Greater and Lesser Tenasserim Rivers. However, the phrase likely has a deeper symbolic meaning which remains obscure [NS/JMK].

271 SHAR GYI, SHAR NGE : literally, long and short tongue. The symbolic meaning is that educated, eloquent people will be replaced by uneducated people [JMK]

272 GAUNGBAUNG-GYI AND COPPER HTI : a large turban or head-covering, and an umbrella, meaning that Myeik will only prosper with a great leader and protector [JMK].

challenges will occur in its center. The town will be rather isolated. Local people will be in a state of unrest, but peace will eventually prevail. Populations of Chinese and Indians will increase. city people will move to the countryside. A *galone* will come to rest on top of Patit Mountain where it will spread its wings.[273] Only when a dragon raises its tail on top of Pataw Mountain will it be known to people. There will be a large market in Kalwin village. Local people will build a phaya and establish a new town with large and small offices. Nipa wine, jackfruit and betel nut will grow well, and there will be a large number of boats along Kun-thee Creek.[274] Waterways in Kyaukpya will be busy with vessels.[275] A sandbank will form downstream of Kyauktada, and there will be settlements along the coast. The Patit shoreline will often flood, causing the deaths of visitors. Pataw and Patit will be ruined. There will be a constant stream of people. There will be huge conflicts between two sides.

Pataw-Patit Island will have wings.[276] The area around Khe Hill will develop into a city. Kalwin will be easily accessible by boat, and one will see a large market there. This was a prophecy written by a man with supernatural powers.

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273 Galone : mythical king of birds and a symbol of Myanmar nationalism and anti-colonialism.

274 Nipa wine : *dhaní-yeh-kha*, or palm toddy from the fruit of *Nipa fruticans*, for which Tenasserim was internationally famous during centuries past (Potter 2020, pp. 35, 53–4; Fedrici 2004; Linschoten 1885, v.1, p. 103).

275 Kyaukpya : the northern entrance of the Tanintharyi River, and thus the northern border of the island of Myeik.

276 Pataw-Patit Island will have wings : perhaps referring to the *galone*. Alternately, it could mean that the island will disappear [PHY/JMK].

39

Myeik

In 1123 ME, Naungdawgyi, the eldest son of King Alaungpaya, appointed Bala Kyaw Htin as mayor of Tanintharyi and U Dein Kyaw as mayor of Mareik.

The organizational structure of the local governments of Myeik and Tanintharyi was as follows : mayor, waterways minister, revenue minister, tax minister, two deputy commanders, two *nar khan daw*, two senior administrators, two branch clerks, junior administrators, four junior clerks, four office assistants, and a variety of tribunal officers, judges and civil servants, as well as 500 soldiers.[277]

The city wall was 1,138 *ta* long and made of logs.[278] It had eight gates, four fortresses with four cannons each, four turrets, four fire-steps, a moat, a granary, a stone gate in the west, a gate at the customs pier,[279] a gate in Seik Nge Yet, four major roads and twelve avenues. The city was named Mareik Kin after Mareik Hill.

The town was initially named Mareik. Later it was known as Myeik. It is also called 'Beik'.

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277 NAR KHAN DAW : officers who presented applications, petitions, etc. to the king, or in this case to the mayor for his decision or his order to have them relayed to suitable people. [TKK]

278 CITY WALL : its length of 1,138 *tar* equates to 3.64 km. This accords with the description of British commissioner A.D. Maingy in 1825, who described it as "a stockade of about 2 ½ miles [4 km], and in its present state quite equal to resist the attacks of an enemy not skilled in the science of war." (Burma, *Selected Correspondence* 1928, p. 56). Under the Thais in 1688, a fort had been designed by a French engineer (probably La Mare) for "an extensive piece of land" in Marit. It was still unfinished when local forces drove out the French in the same year (Smithies 1998, ch. 8). Whether this evolved from or into the palisades is unknown. A possible outline is mapped in Appendix 7.

279 PIER : the Burmese word *tah-da* (တံတား) can mean bridge, pier or jetty.

LIST OF MAYORS THENCEFORWARD

Myanmar Era	Name	CE
1123	U Dein Kyaw	1761
1130	Khema Yaza	1768
1134	Min Ottama	1772
1135	Min Khaung Yaza	1773
1137	U Dein Kyaw	1775
1141	Khaw Htaw Gyi	1779
1142	Shwe Taung Nge	1780
1145	Yway Bo	1783
1147	Nat Su Bo	1785
1152	Lin Sin Bo	1790
1157	U Lun Gyi	1795
1160	Pe-taungza	1798
1168	Thittaw Wun[280]	1806
1174	Maung Lone	1812
1175	Pe-taungza	1813
1178	Min Yan Ku	1816
1179	Maung Zar Mat[281]	1817
1181	Maung Myat Lay	1819

280 Thittaw Wun : the phrase means 'forestry minister', and is therefore a title rather than his name. Also note that the list is not comprehensive. [ns]

281 Maung Zar Mat : the name more accurately transliterates as 'Zarmud', with the second syllable deriving from 'Muhammad'. He was a former Muslim *sitke* of King Bodawpaya in Amarapura. and passed away in Myeik [ns].

Of the word 'Mareik', *ma* stands for 'horse' and *reik* stands for 'hitching post'. Therefore, the word *mareik* means 'horse-hitching post'. It is pronounced 'ma-reik' in the Shan language. Myanmar Mayor U Dein Kyaw ordered it to be pronounced 'Myeik' in the Myanmar language. Then it was inscribed as 'Myeik' by order of the mayor.[282]

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282 MAREIK MEANS 'HORSE-HITCHING POST' : linguistic origins of Marit and Myeik are less certain than Tenasserim, for which all variants trace back to the Pali phrase *Tāṇa-sirī* (see the introduction & note 5). There are many intriguing possibilities, but the fabled horse story is unlikely. In fact, nothing in the Thai name refers to a horse, hitching post or tether. Its spelling—**มะริด** (*mə-rit*)—was consistently written with short or absent vowels in early modern documents, and this form is still used by visiting Thais and local Shans. Though the initial letter **ม** is called *mo mah* ('m-horse') in Thai grammar, that fact is meaningless without the long vowel that makes it **ม้า** (*mah*) in actual usage. Vowel length is critical for Thai, arguably more so than tones, and replacing **า** with **ะ** creates entirely different words. In fact, **มะ** (*mə*) is not a word at all in Thai or Lao. Likewise, **ริด** (*rit*) by itself does not mean anything. Someone may have confused it with **รัด** (*rut*) which means 'to bind', but these words are as different as 'hit' and 'hut' in English. The error was blindly copied for decades without anyone checking its accuracy. As for 'Mareik', it was never used in any Thai or European source that I've seen so far. 'Reik' would likely be **แรก** in Thai, meaning 'first', which does not offer clarity either.

The Burmese name doesn't require torturous speculation. The *yazawin* clearly says 'Myeik' was ordained by Myanmar officials in the 1760s, probably following the vernacular usage of Bamars living in Tenasserim. When spoken, Marit easily becomes M'rit (**มะริด** >> **มริด**), and the exchange of *r* for *y* is common from Thai to Burmese. The final *k* is somewhat mysterious, but notably it was written with a *t* during the Konbaung era. Throughout the *Royal Orders of Burma*, for example, the town was called 'Beit' (ဘိတ်). Kyaw Din's history of Tenasserim says that pronunciation was still used in 1917 (see Appendix 1).

At some point an arranged marriage probably occurred between the Myanmar name and Parama Raja's steed, because the Burmese word for horse is *myin* : မြင်း. Of course, none of this negates the value of the legend.

Intriguingly, the first syllable of the Thai name (**มะ**) frequently initiates phoneticized foreign words. This suggests a deeper origin, yet digging into the nomenclature quickly descends into maddening speculation. Nevertheless, a quick trip down the rabbit hole might include the Khmer word for black pepper: ម្រេច, pronounced *mərɛc* or *mrech*. Tenasserim was not known for *Piper nigrum*, but hypothetically it could have been a transit point for exports from Funan, Chen-la and Angkor in ancient Cambodia. [*cont*.]

Five years after the start of the last mayor's term, the British government began to rule the township.

Myeik and Tanintharyi region were under the rule of twenty-one Myanmar governors for sixty-three years. At dawn on the ninth waxing of Thadingyut in 1186 ME, British colonialists arrived with four warships and launched attacks on the town. At sunset on the fourteenth waxing of Thadingyut, Myanmar forces could no longer resist the enemy attacks. Over 3,000 Myanmar troops fell back and retreated to the south of Myeik, then went into hiding in Kalwin village. The British government has ruled Myeik for 105 years from 1186 to 1291 ME.[283]

END OF MYANMAR HISTORY

[*cont*.] These kingdoms left linguistic traces on the Malay Peninsula such as 'mɛlɛk' (*meh-lek*), the word for black pepper among numerous Moken groups including the Doun Islanders who are closest to Myeik (Larish 1999, p. 890). Conceivably the term could have morphed into Marit/Mareik with a push from Indian merchants in the early 16th century. At that time, there was no widely recognized name for the place, as shown by its total absence from Portuguese maps and documents prior to 1544. Duarte Barbosa in 1515 and the Nunes letter of 1527 (PT/TT/CC/1/37/81) stated that Gujaratis were prominent in the area before then, and intriguingly, the word for pepper in Gujarati is મરી (*mə-rī*), almost exactly like 'Marit' when spoken. When the Thai prince arrived from Ayutthaya and ordered a new town at the foot of Khe Hill, did he revive Moken and Gujarati names for an ancient port that had once sent pepper to the west? Could the opposite be true, that ancient Cambodia *im*ported *Piper nigrum* and other goods (and people and ideas) from India through Tenasserim? Does the fact that 'black pepper' in Gujarati is કાળા મરી ('*ka-la mə-rī*') have any meaning for 'Kala-dtan', the lost settlement on Katan Island that may have been known to the Portuguese as 'Lynguo', where Fernão Nunes said enemy Moors were lurking in his letter to King João III? Could all this assist us in finding the elusive port of Kalah, named by Muslim *nakhodas* since the 9th century? We may never know, but it's fun to play the puzzle. [JP]

283 1291 ME / 1929 CE, the date of the *yazawin*'s initial publication.

40

PROFILE OF BRITISH QUEEN VICTORIA AND HER SONS AND GRANDSONS, AND THE RESTORATION OF LAYKYUNSIMI ZEDI

Bayinma-gyi Victoria ascended to the throne in 1199 ME. On the fourth waxing of Dabodwe in 1262 ME (Tuesday), *Bayinma-phuyar-gyi* Victoria passed away.[284] Her son, the *upa-yaza* of Wales *myozá* Edward, received the title of *Bayin* Edward VII. During his reign, the *bayinkan-chote* of India was Lord Curzon, and the *bayinkan* of Myanmar was Sir Fryer. The *dayay-pine* of Myeik was Deroh-ca-*thakin*.[285]

During that period, venerable Buddhist monks and community elders of the town witnessed the deterioration of Laykyunsimi Zedi due to the ravages of time. They discussed renovation of the old religious site and sought approval from the township governor. With his permission and encouragement, they stockpiled construction materials such as bricks, gravel and cement.

At twelve noon on the seventh waxing of Dabodwe in 1264 ME, the plinth of the zedi was extended two feet on each side.[286] Then the zedi itself was demolished into a mound, from the *hti-daw* down to the bell-shaped section. At this point, many religious objects emerged from the reliquary where they had been enshrined—a *hti-daw*, a small phaya, Buddha images, and three sacred relics of the Buddha that had been kept inside cases of gold, silver and bronze.

Bayin Edward's son was born on Saturday, the eleventh waxing of Nayon, 1227 ME (3 June 1865). At the age of forty-six on Thursday, the eleventh waning of Nayon, 1273 ME (22 June 1911), George *min-tha* was crowned George V, *Bayin* of the United Kingdom and *Maha-ekaya* of India, in the presence of royal family members, ministers, religious leaders, holy persons, princes and foreign diplomats in London. Accom-

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284 BAYINMA-PHUYAR-GYI VICTORIA PASSED AWAY : the queen died on 22 January 1901.

285 DEROH-CA-THAKIN : the name is spelled phonetically. Mergui's deputy commissioner (*dayay-pine*) in 1900 was Mr. D. Ross. *Thakin* is an honorific [TKK/JP].

286 SEVENTH WAXING OF DABODWE, 1264 ME : ca. February 1902

panied by a large entourage and a convoy of military guards, the king left for India. On 12 December 1911 (Tuesday, the seventh waning of Nadaw, 1273 ME) in the capital city of Delhi, together with his spouse *Mihpuyar* Mary, the king was crowned for a second time in the presence of governors, the governor-general, and maharajahs and chieftains of India.

During the reign of *Bayin* George V, the *dayay-pine* of Myeik was Steven.[287] On the third waning of Tazaungmone in 1282 ME, members of the phaya board of trustees and local dignitaries held a meeting. With approval from the township governor, the old *hti-daw* was taken down from the zedi. They weighed the gold that had been installed in the diamond orb and discovered that it only weighed a little over 47 ticals.[288] Therefore, well-wishers donated gold to the restoration. Their total donation weighed a little over 131 ticals. Goldsmiths purified the gold, and thus 179 ticals of pure gold was used for decoration of the pennant-shaped vane, diamond orb, and especially the ornamental umbrella. On the second waning of Tagu, 1283 ME, these religious objects were hoisted atop the zedi.[289] Inspired by profound faith in Buddhism, devout Buddhists donated more than 10,000 gold foils to Laykyunsimi Zedi.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK

287 DAYAY-PINE OF MYEIK WAS STEVEN : Henry Louis Stevenson, deputy commissioner of Mergui, 1916–19.

288 47 TICALS : one tical is 0.576 ounces, so the initial total was about 27 ounces of gold. After donations, roughly 75 ounces were returned. [TKK]

289 SECOND WANING OF TAGU, 1283 ME : ca. April 1921

Obverse and reverse of Nagă coin, Tenasserim, date unknown.
The writing is Pali in Burmese script, which Phayre transcribed as: *Mahā Sukhān ga Nāgarān*, meaning 'City of Great Rest or Happiness' (Wicks 1983, p. 106). Photo by the editor [JP].
Cataloged by Kris van den Cruyce (2023) as type VC 101.4.1

Fifth Book

41

unique names in Myeik District

The manner in which villages in Myeik District were named after unique characteristics or geological features will be explained in this chapter.[290]

Long ago, the area where Kalwin village exists today was on the coast. There was a plain stretching between the Kalwin and Mann Settaw mountain ranges. Over time, sandbanks formed on the plain, and forests grew there. One of the peaks was called Panzin Taung after a species of bird called 'panzin' that searches for food in the water and cries when the tide rises and ebbs. The bird makes a nest by digging into the ground where it lays and broods its eggs until the chicks hatch. Many birds of that species lived in the habitat near the plain and made nests by digging into the sides of the hill. Later, people came to settle at the hill, and they named their village Kalwin after the plain.[291]

A path linked the town [of Myeik] and Kalwin village through a forest of scenic beauty. A canal also flowed the whole year-round between the town and Kalwin village, forming a spectacular waterfall that cascaded down a hillside. The waterfall became a popular picnic site, attracting a constant stream of visitors who visited for fun-bathing, hair-shampooing and picnics. Some people invited their friends by saying "Won't you come along with us to Kalwingyar Falls for a delicious lunch?" Later, the name 'Kalwingyar' became obsolete, and the waterfall was known as 'Gyar Twin'.[292]

As a Burmese way of doing good deeds, a well-wisher could donate a

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290 Villages in Myeik District : please see Appendix 6 for locations.

291 Kalwin : *ka* is a classifier for locations, and *lwin* is the short form of *lwin-pyin*, which means 'plain of land.' [TKK]. The 'panzin bird' is thus far unidentified.

292 Kalwingyar : *gyar* is 'between', meaning between Myeik and Kalwin. *Twin* usually means 'well' in Burmese, but in this context it refers to the waterfall [TKK].

bucket with a rope attached so picnic-goers could fetch water from the well. However, the bucket was often taken away by people. In order that the bucket could not be easily removed, it was replaced with a much larger one. The area was named after the large bucket and thus known as Yaybongyi.[293]

The place outside the patrol unit in the north was known as Tat Pyin.[294] A village established east of town was called Myeik Taung, which later became Beik Taung. There was a place where Chinese people grew sugarcane on a large scale for their livelihood. Later it was known as Kyandaw.[295]

Upstream on Kusinarum Chaung, there was a large stretch of *boke* trees. Later, people cleared the ground, cut down the *boke* trees, and settled there. The village was therefore known as Boke Chaung village.[296]

One time, Shan people came to Kalwin village by water and abducted many local residents aboard their boats. The creek used by the Siamese has been known as Shan Chaung ever since.[297]

Sandawut village was previously called Kyat Ma Wun village in connection with a legend about a treasure trove called Sanda Wut, which was said to be at the top of the hill nearby. Legend has it that long ago many treasure troves were buried and hidden in this vicinity, and also that many custodian spirits guarded the treasure. Ancestors of the villagers were allowed to borrow pots, pans and jewelry from the treasure spirits at Kyauk Phyu Mountain because they kept their prom-

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293 Yaybongyi : literally, 'water bucket big' [TKK].

294 Tat Pyin : meaning 'outside the military post'; *tat* is military or sentry and *pyin* means outside, external [TKK].

295 Kyandaw : meaning 'sugarcane plantation'.

296 Boke Chaung village : GPS 12.453, 98.632 ("Mergui," 1945; aerial sketch map. HIND 1036). *Boke* trees (ဘုတ်သစ်ပင်) are *Diospyros* spp., commonly known as ebony or persimmon trees. In Mergui, prominent species include *D. malabarica* and *D. venosa* Wall. The Kew Herbarium has a holotype of the latter collected by Dr. Helfer at Domel Island on 10 January 1839. He labeled it: "Maba Merguensis Hiern," a synonym of *D. venosa* (Kew, K000792375).

297 Shan : here meaning Thais, perhaps during their raid of c. 1790 which is described above in chapter 29. There are two creeks named 'Shan Chaung'. The one closest to Kalwin is at GPS 12.45, 98.64. The other is two km southeast at GPS 12.44, 98.655.

ises and returned them to the spirits. Later, however, many people kept the new, superior utensils that they borrowed from the spirits, and only returned old, broken ones from their house. Then the spirits grew angry and no longer lent things to the people.

There was a village named 'Shwe Pay' after an old man from Dawei named Po Shwepay who came and settled there.

Pyin Taung Phaya was always crowded with visitors, and its annual *phaya pwe-daw* was held in the months of Tagu and Thadingyut. This pagoda fair was easily accessible on foot, but many people went along the creek by boat. At the foot of the hill which housed the phaya, there was a scenic garden.[298]

In 1243 ME, Po Shwe Min, Po Myat Thar Hmwe, Po Gyar and Po Daw, who all lived near Seik Nge ward, planted a vast fruit garden with the intention of establishing a village at the foot of the hill of a phaya. Later, not only those old men but also other volunteers grew many more plants and trees there. Old Po Gyar said the place they founded would be named Ywathit, meaning 'new village', and so it was called.[299]

There was a hill northeast of Ywathit village. At that time, villagers called it Bangla Taung, or 'Bengal Hill'. Later it was known as Bo Taung or 'European Hill'. After Myeik fell under British colonial rule, a light-house was built on the summit to help vessels navigate the waterway. Later it was named after the lighthouse and known as Mee Pya Taung, or 'Lighthouse Hill'.

Then, a team of Indian surveyors came and surveyed the towns and villages.[300] From the summit of the hill, the captain of the land-survey team inspected other mountains with his binoculars. He stayed at the

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298 PYIN TAUNG PHAYA : GPS 12.394, 98.794

299 YWATHIT : GPS 12.46, 98.66 ; 1243 ME : 1881 CE. This village was also mentioned in royal orders from Ava during Myanmar rule : "Gilt one third of the exterior decoration and leave two-thirds red in a zayat rest house, built near an old pagoda in Ywathit Gyi, now repaired by the wife of Beit myowun, Mergui town officer. This order was passed on 3 July 1787 and proclaimed by Zayya Nawy-atha, Liaison Officer." (Than Tun, part 4 [1986], p. 145)

300 TEAM OF INDIAN SURVEYORS : this may refer to a British survey in the late 1870s (Wright 1908, p. 121).

top of Mee Pya Taung for fifteen days. A bright flag was shown in the daytime and a light was shown at night to direct vessels in navigation along the waterway. Because the captain made a short stay on top of the mountain, it was later known as Bo Taung, or 'Captain's Hill'.[301]

According to some old people, there were several gold deposits in the area. Long ago, two ships arrived to mine the gold. The crew members got a lot of gold and began the voyage home. On their way downriver, the ships collided head to head and both vessels sank. The two mountains near where the ships settled on the riverbed are still called Thinbaw Hmauk.[302]

Long ago, the village was known as Shwe Tuu or 'Gold-mining village' because people mined for gold there. People from other regions called it Shwe Tuu instead of Ywathit. Myeik's annual Shwe Tuu Pagoda Fair is held on a grand scale in the months of Tagu and Thadingyut.

301 Bangla Taung, Lighthouse Hill, Bo Taung : probably just south of Sandawut village. The British War Office map "Mergui" (1948) shows a beacon atop the hill at GPS 12.46, 98.668

302 Thinbaw Hmauk : *thinbaw* means ship and *hmauk* means to capsize [TKK]. Despite disdain from colleagues, I remain steadfast in my belief that သင်္ဘော : *thinbaw* is the Myanmar pronunciation of 'steamboat'. The location is unknown, but perhaps in the narrows at GPS 12.486, 98.72 [JP].

42

THE ROYAL CAPITAL OF TANINTHARYI KINGS:

A BRIEF PROFILE OF THE DYNASTY[303]

In 85 ME, King Kya-Mine left the old royal capital of Thagara in Yaw Na Ka region to search for another suitable place.

In 117 ME, a town was established in Kaw-Bein, which is known as Ramapura or Ramawaddy. In 145 ME, Kya-ka-lin town was established.

In 261 ME, the royal capital of Htauk-kwa was founded. A dynasty of forty-nine kings ruled that country for 220 years. The last king was King Bya Sakkan Peik.

In 483 ME, Bya Sakkan Peik left Htauk-kwa. A year later he established a royal capital named Ban Shaung, two miles northeast of the village now called Mawton. He only lived in the new town for a year. Then he sailed up the Tanintharyi River and in 488 ME established Maw Sunn Gyi Town, which was upstream of Theindaw village. The king departed from this town as well, and in 514 ME he established Aung Thawara city. King Bya Sakkan Peik reigned at the royal capital of Aung Thawara for forty-five years and passed away at the elderly age of ninety. He was succeeded by his son, Parama Raja.

Five kings commencing from Bya Sakkan Peik ruled the country for 117 years. The Kya-Mine dynasty came to an end in 630 ME. The last king had only a daughter. A collaboration of ministers and counselors visited Zagara in Aruza Region to ask for a suitable person to fill the vacant throne.[304]

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303 TANINTHARYI KINGDOMS : there are minor differences of dates and locations between this chapter and the rest of the *yazawin.*

304 ZAGARA, ARUZA REGION, KING LINZIN : Zagara is an alternate spelling for Thagara, an autonomous kingdom near Dawei. According to Than Swe and Elizabeth Moore, in 630 ME (1268 CE) King Linzin (see note 66) would have belonged to the Taungkwe dynastic line (Moore, 2011-a, p. 32). This suggests the line was connected to Htauk-kwe (a later name for Htauk-kwa), the 12th century kingdom on the Tenasserim River. 'Aruza' refers to the wider Dawei region, apparently (also note 66). King Linzin was likely Tai, as his name is a Burmese pronunciation of *lan xang* : ล้านช้าง, Lao for 'million elephants'.

In response, King Linzin of Zagara ordered the second of his three sons to go with the ministers and take the throne of Aung Thawara. Accompanied by the ministers, the prince came to the royal capital and married the princess. He ascended the throne, but only stayed for a few years. In 635 ME, he established a new town in Khayin Thay, which later became Tanintharyi. The town became free from floods only after its stone pillar was erected in 639 ME. It has stood tall until today.

Tawnauklae, formerly called Than Doke village, was once known as Sin Tote town. In 639 ME, a seaport was established for the improvement of water transport. It was also known as Tha Mote Daya Kin town.

In [893] ME, King Bya Rama Thon Tessa moved the port to a place near Khe Hill where he established a seaport town called Mareik. After [the Shan] had ruled Mareik for [228] years, U Aung Zeya conquered Ye, Dawei, Mareik and Tanintharyi in 1121 ME.[305] He then changed the name from Mareik to Myeik, inscribing the new title on a marble plaque. Thirty-two Myanmar *min* governed Myeik and Tanintharyi for sixty-three years.[306]

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK

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305 AS MENTIONED BEFORE, Sein's text has errant dates of 1093 ME instead of 893 ME, and thus 28 years of Thai rule instead of 228 (though the latter number is also dubious because Ayutthaya did not command the place for that entire period). For further explanation, please see note 268.

A more direct translation of the 1929 text could be : "In 1093 ME, King Bya Rama Thon Tessa moved to the place near Khe Hill. And he established a seaport town called Mareik. After he had ruled Mareik for 28 years, in 1121 ME U Aung Zeya conquered Ye, Dawei, Mareik and Tanintharyi and changed the name from Mareik to Myeik, inscribing the name on a marble plaque. Thirty-two Myanmar governors ruled Myeik and Tanintharyi for 63 years."

306 THIRTY-TWO BURMESE MIN : *min* often means king, but in this case it means 'ruler' and thus governor. Most were army generals, indicating that Myeik was a kind of military colony of Ava while the countryside was plagued by Thai invasions, slave raids and guerrilla war between 1760 and 1824. In contrast to the predatory military of Myanmar today, however, the administration of the [*cont.*]

Lion-griffin weight, issued under Hsinbyushin (r. 1763–1776) or Singu (r. 1776–1782). Found in Tenasserim township. See: Gear 1992, pp. 138–9, & Weiss 2017, ch. 22.

[*cont.*] Myanmar myowuns made the town a refuge of relative safety amid the violence. No further proof of this is needed than the British reaction after they seized Myeik. Instead of reform, they chose to continue the practices of their predecessors. Anthony Maingy—the first British commissioner, and himself a hard-working, compassionate person—said of U Myat Lay: "This man was equally distinguished for his mild and good administration as for his attachment to the Court of Ava; he is spoken of with great respect by all the inhabitants of Mergui." (see Appendix 3).

obverse of Tò coin, Tenasserim, possibly 18th century.
found in Tenasserim township
cataloged by Kris van den Cruyce (2023) as type VC 540

Supplement

Yazaniti kyam[307]

DEFINITIONS OF GAMA, NIGAMA AND NAGARA

In the *Kainkha Tika-thit*,[308] these are,

gama : a place or city without neither city walls or a market
nigama : a place or city with a market but not city walls
nagara : a place or city with both city walls and a market

In the *Parazikat Atthakatha,*[309] the meanings of *zanapada* and *rattha* are,

zanapada : a hamlet in the country of a king
rattha : the entire country

In the *Yazawingyi*, the words *nagara* and *gama* are described as:

nagara : a place with both a town and market
gama : a place with either a town or a market

The *Yazawingyi* referenced these to the *Mahāvamsa*,[310] but the *Mahāvamsa* does not mention them. Also, they do not correspond with Buddhist scriptures.

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307 Yazaniti kyam : a Pali treatise on the social conduct and discipline of kings. [nna]. It was translated into Burmese, though possibly U Gyi Sein read the original Pali as well. He also searched through various Buddhist texts referenced by both the *Yazaniti* and *Maha Yazawingyi*, often finding that they did not actually contain the information as claimed. This supplementary chapter appeared in some editions of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. [jp] Translation and research by Ni Ni Aung.

308 Kainkha Tika-thit : ကခ်ါဋီကာသစ်.

309 Parazikat Atthakatha : ပါရာဇိကဏ် အဋ္ဌကထာ.

310 Mahāvamsa : မဟာဝင်, a chronicle of the history of Sri Lanka.

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A CITY

In the *Abidan*[311] and *Yazaniti*, these are,

a king
a-mat [ministers or royal officers]
a friend or ally [*ie*. a relationship with a king of another kingdom]
barns full of the ten jewels and seven rice seedlings
a formidable moat, firearms and palisade
a country or kingdom [*ie*. extensive lands outside the city]
soldiers, royal officers, ministers and so on

Alternatively, the seven characteristics of a city in the *Satta Nibba Anguttor Pali-taw*[312] are,

a well-grounded and immovable wall
a deep and wide moat
a wide passage for soldiers atop a fortification
many weapons
many soldiers, officers and so on
clever gate-guards
a high city wall

The *Yazawingyi* said the *Pinsa Nibba Anguttor Tika*[313] mentioned the following: a fortified city, wide passages for soldiers on the battlements of fortifications, etc. However, the *Pinsa Nibba Anguttor Tika* said nothing about this. Gate pillars were counted as two separate characteristics—an inner pillar and an outer pillar. The city moat was not included, but according to *Pali-taw* [Pali scriptures], the moat should be counted as one characteristic, and the two separate gate pillars (inner and outer) should be combined into one characteristic.

311 Abidan : အဘိဓာန်, a Pali dictionary.

312 Satta Nibba Anguttor Pali-taw : သတ္တနိပါတ်အင်္ဂုတ္တိရ်ပါဠိတော်

313 Pinsa Nibba Anguttor Tika : ပဉ္စနိပါတ်အင်္ဂုတ္တိရ် ဋီကာ.

THE SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A KING'S PYA-KA-TA

In the *Yazaniti*, the seven characteristics of a king's *pya-ka-ta* are,[314]

the king
a-mat [ministers or royal officers]
a place or hamlet where good and wise people live
a moat and fortified city
necessary punishments given for each crime
an inexhaustible barn
an allied king to help if wars occur

These are the seven characteristics according to the *Yazaniti*.

THE FOUR FOODS OF A CITY

In the *Satta Nibba Anguttor Pali-taw*, these are,

plentiful grass, firewood and water
plentiful rice seedlings
plentiful sesame and beans
plentiful butter, palm oil, molasses, salt and herbs

The *Yazawingyi* referenced the *Pinsa Nibba Anguttor Tika* for the following list, but that *text* did not mention them.

rice
grass
water
firewood

314 PYA-KA-TA : ပြကတော့ : the Myanmar word is somewhat difficult to define. Literally, it means 'natural or original condition', but used here it also implies that these seven characteristics are necessary for a proper kingdom. English equivalents might include kingship, sovereignty, or regality.

THE FOUR CORPS OF BATTLE

In the *Abidan*, the four corps are,

elephant cavalry
horse cavalry
chariots
infantry

The *Yazawingyi* said these were listed according to the *Yazaniti*, but the *Yazaniti* did not mention them.

THE FIVE ARTICLES OF CORONATION REGALIA

There are five articles of coronation regalia. These are,

fly whisk (from a yak's tail)
crown
four-edged dagger
white umbrella
footwear

These were mentioned in the *Mukapitka Jataka*, *Abidan*, *Thatta Nibba Thankatesa Jataka*.[315]

315 Mukapitka Jataka : မုကပက္ခဇော်.
Thatta Nibba Thankatesa Jataka : သတ္တနိပါတ် သံကိစ္စဇော်.

FIVE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Five musical instruments are,

single-headed drums such as *o-si*, *si-pote*, etc.

double-headed drums such as *muyo-si* and so on

drums completely covered by leather (or double-headed such as *htet-si* and so on)

takhelnet-si such as gongs, brass gongs, cymbals and so on

instruments with hollow chambers such as oboes, flutes, conchs, etc.[316]

These are the five instruments from the *Abidan*. The *Yazawingyi* referenced them to the *Milinda Pinnya,*[317] but the *Milinda Pinnya* did not mention them.[318]

FIVE STRENGTHS OF A KING

strength of body

strength of treasure such as gold and silver

strength of soldiers and royal officers

strength of a great city

strength of wisdom

These are the five strengths of a king from the *Satta Lithaniya Te Sakuna Jataka*.[319]

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316 Hollow chamber : အခေါင်းရှိသောစည်

317 Milinda Pinnya : မိလိန္ဒပညာ.

318 Five instruments : this list is somewhat unusual. Generally in Myanmar, the five types of musical instruments are *kyey* (metal instruments), *kyo* (string instruments), *thaye* (instruments made of leather), *lei* (wind instruments) and *let khoke* (percussion instruments). [nna]

319 Satta Lithaniya Te Sakuna Jataka : စတ္တာလီသနိပါတ်တေသကုဏာဇာတ်.

EIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES OF A KING

There are eight responsibilities of a king. These are,

the responsibility for his parents
for his queen, children and female attendants
for his relatives and royal officers
for the attendants of his elephants, horses, soldiers and officers
for the small and large villages
for all of his countries and hamlets
for the monks and Brahmins
for the animals

These are the eight responsibilities of a king according to the *Suvanna Sama Jataka*.[320]

320 Suvanna Sama Jataka : သုဝဏ္ဏသာမဇာတ်, the third of the ten great Jatakas.

TWELVE RITUALS OF A CHAKRAVARTI

There are twelve rituals of a Chakravarti.[321] These are,

for the king's officials (of the inner palace)
for the subordinate kings[322]
for the Brahmins
for the wealthy people
for the hamlets
for the monks and Arahants
for the predators [*ie.*, forest animals like tigers]
for the birds
for avoiding iniquity and injustice
for doing charity
for discussing problems with the Sangha and Brahmins
[the twelfth responsibility was not listed]

These are the twelve rituals of a Chakravarti according to the *Patayrawit Cakkavatti Sutta*.[323]

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321 Chakravarti : a Pali term denoting an all-powerful ruler who conquers and spreads Buddhism throughout the world. In some conceptions, *chakravartins* are secular counterparts to a spiritual Buddha. [JP]

322 Subordinate kings : literally translated as 'kings who were consecrated', meaning vassal kings of lesser countries.

323 Patayrawit Cakkavatti Sutta : ပါထေယျဝဂ်စက္ကဝတ္တိသုတ်.

TEN OBLIGATIONS OF A KING

There are ten obligations of a king. These are,

generosity and giving donations
keeping the Five or Ten Precepts[324]
doing charity and sacrificing for the good of the people
upholding justice, honesty and integrity
showing kindness and gentleness
keeping the Eight Precepts (of austerity in habits)
avoiding anger, hatred and enmity
avoiding abuse and violence towards citizens
patience, forbearance and tolerance
not obstructing the will of the people

These are the ten obligations of a king according to the *Athiti Nibba Maha Hantha Jataka*.[325] The *Yazawingyi* referenced them in the *Pinsa Nibba Anguttor Tika* but they were not mentioned in that text.

There are another eight obligations of a king. These are,

As Thagyamin (Indra) suppresses and praises the creatures, so must the king act like him.

As the sun gradually dries out water within eight months (four months of summer and four months of winter), so must the king gradually charge taxes in the kingdom.

As wind passing through the body, so must he know others by use of spies.

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324 Five or Ten Precepts of Buddhism : these include: to abstain from killing any living beings; to abstain from taking what is not given; to abstain from illicit sexual conduct; to abstain from telling lies or false speech; to abstain from consumption any kind of intoxicant; to abstain from eating after mid-day; to abstain from singing, dancing, music and shows; to abstain from wearing perfume, cosmetics or decorative accessories; to abstain from using high or luxurious seats or beds; to abstain from holding, receiving or managing gold, silver or currency of any kind. [NNA/JP]

325 Athiti Nibba Maha Hantha Jataka : အသီတိနိပါတ် မဟာဟံသဇာတ်.

As Yamamin (the King of Hell) takes the lives of both the beloved and the hated, so must the king give appropriate punishment for each crime with indifference towards the beloved and the hated.

As the ocean has no greed and lets water flow into rivers, so must the king avoid greed for prosperity and wealth.

As looking at the full-moon is pleasant, so must the king let his face be seen by the people.

As the earth functions equally on good and bad people, so must the king serve country, town, village and hamlet equally.

As Moe-Nat-thar[326] provides rain for four months, so must the king satisfy his soldiers and warriors with provisions

These are the eight obligations of a king according to the *Yazaniti*.

SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROSPERITY OF A COUNTRY

There are seven principles for the prosperity of a country. These are,

constantly holding discussions

acting unitedly

upholding and obeying the laws of ancestor kings

respecting elders

discountenancing the oppression of women

conducting traditional occasions of charity such as offerings to the guardian *nats* of the country

nurturing virtuous monks

These are the seven principles for prosperity of a country according to the *Satta Nibba Anguttor Palitaw*. The *Yazawingyi* referenced the *Saratthadipani*,[327] but these were not in that text.

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326 Moe-nat-thar : မိုးနတ်သား, meaning 'Lord of Rain'.

327 Saratthadipani (-tika) : သာရတ္ထဒီပဏီ.

FOUR RULES OF GOOD SOCIAL RELATIONS OF THE KING

There are four rules of good social relations of a king. These are,

collecting a tax one of ten percent
supplying provisions to soldiers and warriors every six months
offering capital expenditures to the poor and receiving back the principal after three years
kindness in speech

These are the four rules of good social relations of a king according to the *Athta Nibba Anguttor Pali-taw*.[328] In the *Yazawingyi*, it pointed *Pinsa Nibba Tazathara Jataka*.[329] But these were not in that text.

Another list of four rules of good social relations is,

charity
kindness in speech
endeavor for the benefit of others
sympathy

These are the other four rules of good social relations according to the *Satuka Nibba Anguttor Pali-taw*.

328 Athta Nibba Anguttor Palitaw : အဋ္ဌနိပါတ်အင်္ဂုတ္တိရ်ပါဠိတော်.

329 Pinsa Nibba Tazathara Jataka : ပဉ္စနိပါတ်တဇောသရဇာတ်.

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD ROYAL OFFICER

There are eight characteristics of good royal officers. These are,

wisdom
keeping the Buddhist Precepts
bravery
diligence
accomplishing affairs
possessing ability and strength
being non-greedy
a pleasant appearance

These are the eight characteristics of a good royal officer according to the *Yazaniti*.

NINE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SITTHUGYI

There are nine characteristics of a *sitthugyi*.[330] These are,

being clever to defeat the enemy
taking responsibility for sovereign lands[331]
never abandoning stragglers when the troops are destroyed
showing equality towards rich and poor
strength and power
moral purity
proficiency in the art of war
managing his soldiers well so they are not exhausted
bravery and honor

These are the nine characteristics of a *sitthugyi* according to the *Yazaniti*.

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330 Sitthugyi : head commander of armed forces.

331 Responsibility for sovereign lands : meaning awareness and governance of all countries in a king's possession, including vassals and defeated foes.

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIPLOMAT[332]

There are eight characteristics of the diplomat. These are,

knowing and understanding the meaning of every word
ability to speak so others can understand
ability to memorize
ability to remember so as not to forget
being clever in situations
willing to share knowledge with others
being clever, depending on its benefits
ability to prevent arguments

These are the eight characteristics according to the *Athta Nibba Anguttor Pali-taw*. The *Yazawingyi* referenced them in the *Yazaniti* but they are not in that text.

SIX CHARACTERISTICS OF THE THANDAWGAN

wisdom
clever speech
bravery
understanding the minds of others
respectfulness
ability to respond to every question

These are the six characteristics of the *thandawgan*.[333]

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332 Diplomat : တမန်, literally 'messenger', but here implying diplomacy too.

333 Thandawgan : သံတော်ခံ : literally, 'receiver of the royal voice'. [nna] Note that the role of an envoy in Southeast Asia could be very distinct from the European sense. The former were usually just mouth-pieces for kings, as advertised by the Myanmar definition given here. They usually had very limited autonomy to make their own decisions. In contrast European ambassadors, such as the *envoyés extraordinaires* from Louis XIV to Ayutthaya in the 1680s, often had greater leeway to make decisions or even policy based on the circumstances they encountered. [jp]

SIX CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SERVANT

There are six characteristics of a good servant. These are,

preventing evil from coming to his master
seeking advantages for his master
keeping the secrets of his master
ability to express gratitude
not abandoning his master when facing danger
delivering messages and presents to his master

These are the six characteristics of a good servant according to the *Yazaniti*. The *Yazawingyi* referenced them to the *Saratthadipani*, but they are not in that text.

THE FOUR NECESSARY PERSONS

There are four necessary persons. They are,

the warrior who is brave in battle
the person who speaks cleverly in discussions
the beloved one who shares food and drink
the wise person who solves problems

These are the four necessary persons according to the *Eka Nibba Tasathara Jataka*.[334] The *Yazawingyi* mentioned them as the four persons necessary to the king, then referenced the *Saratthadipani*. But these were not in the *Saratthadipani*, and the characteristics are also different.

334 Eka Nibba Tasathara Jataka : ဧကနိပါတ် တစသာရဇာတ်

FIVE REASONS FOR VICTORY

There are five reasons for victory. These are,

chanting incantations
consultations with wise people
kindness in speech
dispensing royal gifts that promote peace
creating relatives [*ie*., marriage between royals and nobles of different kingdoms]

These are the five reasons according to the *Pinsa Nibba Tazathara Jataka*.

SEVEN FEATURES OF GRACE

The seven features of grace are,

charity is the grace of a king
a feathery tail is the grace of a *sarmaye*[335]
bravery is the grace of a lion
power is the grace of a *garuda*
being able to answer public questions is the grace of the wise
standing on the battleground is the grace of the hero
speaking the truth is the grace of the monk or the hermit

The *Yazawingyi* described these features according to the "*Pinsa Nibba Mahathara Jataka*".[336] But the *Mahathara Jataka* is not in the *Pinsa Nibba*. It is in the *Eka Nibba*, and furthermore there is no mention of the seven graces in the *Mahathara Jataka*.

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335 Sarmaye : စာမရီ, meaning a wild yak, but depicted in Myanmar artistry as a somewhat mythical animal with a feathery tail. Yak tails were also refined, softened and used as whisks during ceremonies. The fly whisk listed in the coronation regalia above was an example.

336 Pinsa Nibba Mahathara Jataka : ပဉ္စနိပါတ်မဟာသာရဇာတ်.

FOUR REASONS FOR THE PROSPERITY OF A COUNTRY

There are four reasons of prosperity. These are,

farmers and gardeners
traders and merchants
virtuous royal officers
wise and virtuous monks

These are the four reasons according to the *Yazaniti*.

Moreover, the *Yazawingyi* mentioned twelve obligations of a king. These are,

not insulting the Three Gems (Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha)
avoiding jealousy
appreciation for people who give charity
associating with wise people
being charitable without hesitation
accepting the code of laws (the justice of Dhamma)
obeying the rules
making history
keeping the Five Precepts of Buddhism
controlling anger
avoiding demerits
ruling well over the people and monks

The *Yazawingyi* referenced these twelve obligations to the *Suvanna Sama Jataka*. But the descriptions in that jataka are not similar to these. They only appeared in some compilations of notes [*ie*., not in the actual text]. Even the Buddhist scriptures did not mention them.

FIVE KINDS OF HTI-PHYU
(WHITE UMBRELLAS)[337]

kyanyan hti (a tiered parasol placed over the royal bedstead)
uyu hti (a white parasol guarded by the goddess Uru)
tamut hti (an umbrella used by royalty while traveling)
kanekkedan hti (a white silken umbrella with a shaft of gold that stands beside the king's throne)
thamuti hti (a white parasol guarded by the goddess Thaumdi, and used to cover the king)

THREE TYPES OF SI
(DRUMS)

win-si, from Southern India (for when a king enters a conference)
si-wun, from China (a circular drum or gong)
si-byaw, from Myanmar (a drum set)

TWELVE KINDS OF SI

myauk si (a ceremonial drum used by royalty)
than lwin (small brass cymbals)
si byaw (a type of long drum)
si-gyi (large bass drum)
done-min (a plucked zither, but also a wind instrument)
si-wun (a circular drum from China)
si-thay (a small drum)
si-pote (a short drum with a wide upper part and narrow lower part)
si-pan-taung (possibly a 'flower-basket shaped' drum)
pat-thar (timbrel)
ta-phet-si (a one-sided drum)
si-ai

337 FOR THE FOLLOWING SIX LISTS of umbrellas and musical instruments, explanations in parentheses are by the current team of editors. [JP/NNA/TZL]

TEN KINDS OF KYEY
(METAL INSTRUMENTS)

timing bells
cymbals
brass gong
bell
triangular brass gong
nayezaya (another type of brass gong)
small bell
circular brass gong
ozi (a tenor drum held under the arm and beaten by hand)
[the tenth instrument was not listed]

EIGHT KINDS OF TAPO
(WIND INSTRUMENTS)

dulaung	
khayar kaut	(a curved, trumpet-like instrument)
khayar	(a trumpet-shaped wind instrument)
mwar	
let-tan-shi	(a trumpet with a long pipe)
hne	(an oboe-like instrument)[338]
palwei	(a type of flute)
phet-leik	

338 HNE : James Low's elaborate description from 1825 is: "*hné* : a brass trumpet or harsh, dissonant clarionet, having a wooden six-holed flute attached to its upper orifice. This is moveable, and is pulled out to a sufficient length when the instrument is to be played. A number of mouth-reeds of different sizes are suspended from the top of the flute. The sound greatly resembles that of the Pipe of the North; and were a pibroch to be sent forth from it in one of the deep valleys amidst the Tavayan mountains, it is possible, that even a Child of the Mist might, in listening to it, be rapt in imagination to a Highland glen." Low, *History of Tenasserim*, ch. 10. Captain Low was native to Fife, Scotland, and thus well accustomed to "harsh, dissonant" instruments.

SIX KINDS OF ANYEIKTIMYO
(INSTRUMENTS THAT MAKE SOOTHING SOUNDS)

saung (harp)

nyin (a kind of wind instrument)

mi gyaung (a three-stringed instrument shaped like a crocodile)

aungkalay (a stringed instrument)

pattala (bamboo xylophone)

tayaw (violin)

The *Yazawingyi* described five kinds of *hti-phyu*, three kinds of *si*, twelve more kinds of *si*, ten kinds of *kyey*, eight kinds of *tapo* and eight kinds of *anyeiktimyo*, for which it referenced the *Milinda Pinnya*. But these are not in the *Milinda Pinnya*.

THE FOUR NECESSARY PERSONS

The four necessary persons are,

the brave man of the battleground

the martyr

the kind-hearted person worthy of honor

the person who willingly increases the prosperity of his lord

These are the four necessary persons

FOURTEEN PEOPLE TO TAKE CARE OF

The fourteen people to take care of are,

the person who looks after the king
the person who admires the king
the person who sees advantages for the king
the person who sacrifices for the king
the person who obeys the king
the person who brings the most victories
the person who has a family
the person who brings prosperity to a town or city
the person who motivates people to not forget the king
the person who takes responsibility for the affairs of the king
the person who solves problems in a righteous way that eludes others
the person who completes journeys or goals that other cannot
the person who does his duty respectfully
the person whose descendants remain loyal to the king

These are the fourteen people to take care of.

THE THREE UNFORGETTABLE PERSONS

The three unforgettable persons are,

the person who saves the life of the king
the person who looks after the king while he is poor
the person who gives the crown to be a king crowns the king

These are the three unforgettable persons.

TEN REASONS WHY A COUNTRY PROSPERS

Ten reasons why a country prospers are,

the right astrological influence
regular rain
good soil that flourishes well
freedom from the dangers of predators
freedom from crime
freedom from war
freedom from giving trouble to each other
honest conduct
respect for the Three Gems of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha
monks who maintain the Buddhist Sasana

These are the ten reasons why a country prospers.

EIGHT FEATURES POSSESSED BY A LARGE COUNTRY

The eight features possessed by a large country are,

the leader of war, a *sitthugyi*
the eyes of war, Hura Brahmins [fortune tellers]
the ears of war, spies
the strength of war, soldiers
the mouth of war, a clever diplomat
the fangs of war, royal officers
the feet of war, an infantry
good weapons and war horses

These are the eight features possessed by a large country.

THIRTEEN REASONS WHY WAR OCCURS

There are the thirteen reasons why war occurs. These are,

for boundaries
for property
for good elephants and horses
from mischievous words
for betrayal
from misunderstanding an ultimatum
from breaking a relationship
due to a king who fails to serve the city
from not having good soldiers and officers
for merchants
for taking revenge
[the twelfth and thirteenth causes were not listed]

These are the thirteen reasons why war occurs.

SEVEN MEANS OF INVESTIGATION

[METHODS OF DETECTING FOREIGN SPIES]

There are seven ways of investigation around the city. These are,

by sending spies to the other side
by watching spies sent from the other side
by information learned in trading
by bribing merchants who have come from the other side
by sending envoys
by cleverly inquiring of someone from the person's country
by offering presents and inquiring of the other side's diplomats

These are the seven ways of investigation.

TWELVE CAUSES OF VICTORY

The twelve causes of victory are,

a clever strategy
unity of the king and royal officers
generous offerings to people
a clever *sitthugyi*
many good soldiers
chanting incantations
good fortune
plenty of sustenance (crops, grains, water, wood and grass)
health of the king and the people
use of spies
traditional offerings to the country's guardian nats
many good war horses and elephants

These are the twelve causes of victory.

TEN CAUSES OF LOSING A WAR

The twelve causes of defeat are,

corruption of the king and royal officers
disease among the people
weakness of the warriors and soldiers
a poor or cowardly king
misfortune
because the enemy cast a spell
lack of good war elephants or horses
disunity between the king and officers
lack of good warriors
famine

These are the ten causes of losing a war.

THREE PERSONS WHO SHOULD BEHAVE LIKE A HMANKIN

The three kinds of persons who should behave like a *hmankin* are,

a person of high birth
a wise person
an elderly person

Just as a *hmankin* is a consecrated ornament placed at the pinnacle of a *pyatthat*, these people should behave like a *hmankin*.[339]

SIX PERSONS WHO SHOULD BEHAVE LIKE ZABURIT GOLD

Six persons who should behave like *zaburit* gold are,[340]

a person of high birth
a virtuous man
a virtuous woman
an Arahant
a hermit
a Brahmin

These are the six. Just as *zaburit* gold cannot be mixed with dirt and mud, these people should not abandon their relatives or their family names even when they are in poverty.

TWO MEN WHO SHOULD BEHAVE LIKE LIONS

Two men who should behave like lions are,

the king
a judge

These are the two persons who should behave like lions. Just as a lion chases large and small creatures with equal diligence, so must these persons diligently perform tasks both large and small.

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339 Hmankin : 'a person or thing holding a most exalted position'.

Pyatthat : ပြဿဒ် : an elaborately ornamented structure with multiple roofs and gables that was built above city gates.

340 Zaburit gold : religious scriptures say this gold came from the fruit of a rose apple tree (*Syzygium* spp.). [nna]

A PERSON WHO SHOULD BEHAVE LIKE AN ARTHARWADDY NAT-PAN[341]

Like celestial beings who take care of the Artharwadddy Nan-pan, or flower of the Garden of Heaven which only blooms once in a hundred years, the queens of kings and emperors must protect these virtues :

The four necessary persons
The fourteen people to take care of
The three unforgettable persons
Ten reasons why a country prospers
Eight features possessed by a large country
Thirteen reasons why war occurs
Seven means of detection
Twelve causes of victory
Ten causes of losing war
The three kinds of persons who should behave like a *hmankin*
The six kinds of persons who should behave like *zaburit* gold
The two men who should behave like lions
A person who behaves like a Arthurwaddy Nat-pan

In the *Yazawingyi*, the titles above were ascribed to the *Saratthadipani-tika*. In fact, the *Saratthadipani-tika*, *Pali Athakatha-tika*, *Le Than*, and *Ganhtantara* scriptures said nothing about them.[342] However, they were mentioned in a treatise of worldly affairs entitled *Thayningabyuha* ["Art of War"]. This was an account of the preaching of Thiripapasha Nat to King Asalima and Auntathami Puyawheit [a court Brahmin who officiated at royal ceremonies and advised the king]. Thiripapasha Nat had been a friend of King Asalima and Auntathami Puyawheit in a previous life. Under the title "Persons behaving like a lion," for example, the *Yazaniti* says, "Just as a lion diligently chases creatures both large and small, so also must a king diligently serve whether an affair is large or small." No two persons can act like a lion. It is said that these rules of conduct of royals and nobles are according to Buddhist scriptures.

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341 Artharwadddy Nan-pan : a climbing plant in the Garden of Heaven which only flowers once every thousand years, though Sein wrote one hundred. [NNA]

342 Le Than and Ganhtantara scriptures : လက်သန်း and ဂန္ဆန္တရ.

END OF THE TANINTHARYI YAZAWIN

BY U GYI SEIN

Appendix 1

"The History of Tenasserim and Mergui"

Kyaw Din

Journal of the Burma Research Society
vol. 7, 1917

INTRODUCTION[343]

The history of Tenasserim and Mergui which is given here, is a translation from scraps of manuscripts which were shown to me [Kyaw Din] by one U Shwe Lon, old retired Myothugyi of Mergui. He assured me that these manuscripts are true copies from the original palm leaf manuscripts in the possession of several different owners, most of which, however, were destroyed in the great fire of Mergui which burnt practically the whole of Naukle Quarter some four or five years ago. Not only there is no reason to doubt this old gentleman's statement, but there is every indication in the copies, such as style, spelling, mode of expression and etc. to show that the originals are of great antiquity and that the copies are true and faithful.

Much of the mediæval history of the province is fairly well known, European and Indian traders having visited this province even as early as the 14th century. Their descriptions and accounts of the province are

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343 [Kyaw Din's text is copied *verbatim* from JBRS 1917. It can be compared to chapters 8, 9 & 42 in this translation of the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*. The versions differ in small details, but otherwise in close agreement. (jp)]

interesting so far as trade and commerce were commenced, but are of not much value as real history.

I give this short history of the province, with all diffidence in myself, with a hope that readers wall find it of some interest as history from a Burmese point of view.

Much of the matter given in the appendix is taken from Dr. Anderson's *English Intercourse with Siam*.

Usual invocation :

Honour to the Blessed Saint, the Buddha Supreme.

The Blessed Lord, the Omniscient one to whom the past, the present and the future revealed themselves as the rays of the sun, seeing what was to happen in days to come to the kingdoms of the earth, being desirous of revealing what he foresaw, made an itinerant journey and arrived at Dwârâwâddî.‡

On his journey thence to Kawthambi Kingdom, the master seeing the inhabitants of Taninthâri island, unaccompanied by any Rahans paid them a visit one morning begging his food. The Rahans asked the Blessed One, the reason of this lonely visit. The master replied "My beloved sons, when Kawthambi kingdom is laid waste, this Taninthâri island will become the capital of a great kingdom."

After this, seeing the 99 caves and openings of the Rat King, the master prophesied that in this place the city of Mergui would arise; so saying he journeyed on northwards.

Even as he had prophesied, on the destruction of Kawthambi Kingdom, Taninthâri became the capital of a great kingdom, ruled by Bâhi Ka, the elder, a prince of blood royal; during this reign the king of Pegu waged wars on it. Bahi Ka was defeated and sought shelter in the kingdom of Gida [Kedah].

His young brother Bahika Raja after gathering the inhabitants of outlying districts, regained Taninthari and ruled in it. During this reign the king of Dwârâwaddî waged wars and conquered the kingdom, driving the king out of it. Bahika Raja, however, with the aid of the king of Daiññyawaddî recovered his kingdom and rebuilt the city of Taninthâri at noon on the 4th waning of Kason, in the year 735 [ME], from which

‡ KYAW DIN : "Dwarawaddi is the ancient Burmese name for Siam."

date his descendants ruled over the province. In the year 900 while king Udaing was reigning, owing to a boundary dispute, the king of Dwârâwaddî personally at the head of a large army invaded Taninthâri for the second time and pitched his camps at Kammaungthwe Chaung, from which place an ambassador was sent demanding the surrender of the kingdom with its capital. The Taninthâri king refused to surrender and came out to offer battle. In this battle King Udaing himself was killed and his Chief Queen Hninnwe Devi was made captive.[344]

From this date Taninthâri came under the suzerainty of Dwârâwaddî. Nine kings of this dynasty ruled in Taninthâri, the last being Bala Kyedauk who ruled from 1092 to 1119 [ME].

When Bahika Raja rebuilt Taninthâri, it measured 81 Kyos‡ in circumference and had eight main gates and four wicket gates. He also defined the boundaries in the eight regions thus :

On the north-east up to Kammaungthwe chaung; on the east to Wimbalon; on the south-east to Thalin city; on the south to Kasingte; on the west to Kunthi and Kunywet islands; on the north to four islands of Mali, Petagee, Kyauksarit and Hngatthaik Taung.[345]

The kingdom was also divided into twelve provinces, containing thirty-two towns. The provinces were, Palaw, Palauk, Beittaung, Thay-Ma Taung, Taungpila, Kalwin, Tanyet, Tamoke, Lonkayan Taung, Pyinwun, Panthonedoung and Thandoke.

In 1121, the Burmese king Alaungpara the Great, invaded Taninthâri and occupied Thâri Island and appointed Nga Sat Chye as Governor. The king on hearing that Nga Sat Chye had conspired with the Siamese of Taninthâri to rise up in rebellion, appointed Udain Kyaw as Governor. The new governor after having purged the city and the province of conspiracy and sedition, ruled in Taninthâri with righteousness, showing great compassion on the citizens and observing the ten kingly precepts.

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344 [Queen Hninnwe Devi : her name seems Burmese. Possibly, this is a sign of the diverse population of Tenasserim in the 1530s, as King Udaing is thought to have been Tai. (JP)]

‡ Kyaw Din : "Kyo better known as (ဥသဘ) Uthapa. 7 cubit = 1 ta. 20 ta = 1 Uthapa."

345 [Boundaries : see note 81 for discussion. (JP)]

In the year 1123 [ME], on the 5th waxing of Tagu, Udain Kyaw Min, having brought his followers from Taninthâri, first founded the city of Myeit.

The fortress and moat surrounding the city were, built by Kâmanî Mingyi at 1 o'clock, on the 7th waxing of Thadingyut 1124. The city measured 183 *tas* in circumference.[346]

In the year 1132, during the reign of Glorious Simbyuyin, Kema-raja Mingyi was appointed governor with royal authority to rebuild this city. Kema-raja collected all the inhabitants of outlying districts and allotted them in different localities and named them in the following manner :

The inhabitants of Pin Oh, Kyaukpya, and from the villages along Myitnge were allotted in one quarter which was named Myitnge quarter; the inhabitants of Pakok Taung and Taungpila at Alegyun quarter; the inhabitants of the Kywe Kayan and Nyaungbi at Myitma quarter; the inhabitants of Thondoke, Thayin, Tawnaukle at Naukle quarter; the Talaings from Moattama at Talaingzu quarter; the inhabitants from Aletan at Aletan quarter; the Musalmans at Kankaung quarter: the Kathes from the islands at Kathezu and Seiknge quarter; the inhabitants of Palaw and from the northern villages at Tavoyzu quarter.‡

The Mingyi, after having thus permanently demarcated the town into different quarters, and having invited twelve elders of the town, eight Ponnas and officials, dedicated the town to the three Gems at one o'clock on Saturday the 1st waning of Tawthalin, 1132 .

(*Note*. Here follows a long and uninteresting account of the festival held in honour of the city and also about twenty-five to thirty Thaiks and Thamaings regarding the town. The latter are of course interesting but as they have nothing much to do with history I have omitted them also. However, I may, in passing remark that some of the these Thaiks have come very true.)

The Government of the town consisted of a Mingyi, a Port officer, Customs officer, Revenue officer, two Commandants, two heralds, two

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346 [138 TA would only be 440 meters. This is evidently a misprint, as is the figure of '11,038 *ta*' (35 km) a few paragraphs below. U Gyi Sein gave a more plausible length of 1,138 ta (3.64 km) in chapters 22 and 39. (JP)]

‡ KYAW DIN : "These quarters are still known by these names."

senior scribes, two myothugyis, ward elders, ward scribes, four court officers, many judges and magistrates and five hundred soldiers.

The town was surrounded by a moat and wooden stockade measuring 11,038 *tas* in circumference. It had eight main gates, eight wicket gates, four large turrets on the city wall each one mounted with four cannons, four small turrets, four main roads and twelve lesser ones.

APPENDIX

In European literature Mergui was first mentioned by one De Barros in or about the year 1563. He gave the name of the town or rather village it then was as Merguim, while the English who resided in Mergui in or about 1650 called it Mergen. Niccolò de Conti (1440) probably was the first European who visited this province.

In the descriptions of his travels he described Mergui "as being situated at the mouth of the river of the same." He called it Thenasserim but from his descriptions it is perfectly obvious that the port at which his ship called was not Tenasserim but Mergui.[347]

Cesure de Fredrich in 1568 described Mergui by name thus "this citie (Tenasserim) of right belongeth to the Kingdom of Siam, which is situate on the grate river's mouth, which cometh out of the kingdom of Siam, and where this river runneth into the sea, there is a village called Mergui and etc."[348]

Early travellers knew Tenasserim well as it was situated on the main route to Siam and by the beginning of the 16th century Tenasserim was well known to Europe.

The word Tenasserim derives from Tanah and Sri, both Malay words, the former meaning country and the latter meaning property, beauty, grace, glory.

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347 [Perfectly obvious : in fact, Conti did not mention Mergui because it did not yet exist during his visit. Additionally, in some versions he only cites the Tenasserim River, not the city. (Conti 2004). (jp)]

348 [Cesar Fedrici : this trader's information may or may not have been accurate, but it is clear from his text that he never visited Mergui. He and his companions drifted past the town while they were lost and starving in an open boat in the Mergui Archipelago. (Fedrici 2004). (jp)]

From the descriptions given by early travellers it is apparent that during the 15th century Mergui was only a very small village probably used as a fishing base and Tenasserim was the chief town of the province. Even as late as in 1686 when Richard Burneby was appointed Governor of Mergui by the Siamese government his title was *Opra Marit*—a title borne by Siamese governors of 4th and 5th grade cities.

Much speculation and thought have been given as to why the town is called Myeit. The Siamese name of Mergui is Marit, the Burmese name is Myeit or Beit.

The usual explanation is that the Siamese Marit becomes Myeit in Burmese, the *ra* sound being silent, and Myeit becomes Beit by influx of time. This explanation is plausible but to me it seems improbable for if the word Myeit is the corruption of the Siamese name Marit, then it bears no meaning as a name, in which case it is indeed difficult to understand how Myeit ever changed into Beit by any known process.

The true explanation seems to me to be this. *Beit* (ဘိတ်) is a true Burmese word being the colloquial form of Myeit (မြိတ်) and the corruption of the word Peit (ဗိတ်), meaning the last, to close up, come to an end, extremity. The kingdom of Burma at the zenith of its power was never extended beyond Mergui on the south and Mergui had been the extreme limit, the last of the Burmese Empire. Hence it is called Beit (ဘိတ်) written Myeit (မြိတ်) meaning the last town, the extreme town or the end town.

KYAW DIN

Appendix 2

"Notes on the History of Tenasserim and Mergui"

Maung Kyi O

Journal of the Burma Research Society
vol. 12, 1922

The following notes are gleaned from Burmese manuscripts and will be of some interest to the readers of the *Journal*. Mergui was formerly known as *Mergi* by Cesare dei Fedrici ; as *Mergy* by Van Schonten and as *Myrghy* by Van Vliet (see *English Intercourse with Siam* by Dr. Anderson). The Siamese name of this town is "Malit" or "Marit" from which the Burmese name "Myeit' is derived. Opinions differ as to the exact meaning of "Marit." A Siamese friend says that it is the name of a Beloo or ogre who was said to have resided in this place. The meaning which is commonly accepted is *a post to which a horse was tethered*. Like most historical towns, the place could boast of a legend. A king of a certain country fell in love with an ogress who assumed the shape of a very pretty maiden, married and appointed her as one of his queens. By the magic art of this ogress the chief queen became blind. This fact so enraged the prince, her son, that he vowed vengeance on his stepmother. The latter appeased him by a promise of marriage to him with her daughter by a former husband. He was asked to ride on a fairy horse, cross the ocean and see the princess who was residing at a certain island, and give her a certain bottle which was said to contain a message from the mother. The fairy horse flew away carrying the prince on his

back. They reached an island at night and the prince went off to sleep there after having tethered his horse. He woke up in the middle of the night and saw a light on an island opposite to the one on which he slept. In the morning he crossed the sea to where the light was seen and there met a certain hermit, who, when he found out the object of the prince's errand, examined the bottle containing the ogress' message or token. In place of the poison with which the prince should be killed by the ogress, was quietly substituted a love philtre, and the hermit returned the bottle. The prince then continued his journey and eventually reached his destination. Thanks to the hermit's kind action the prince was welcomed by the ogress princess, whom he married afterwards. One day he told his wife about his mother's affliction, and asked her if she knew of any medicine which would restore his mother's sight. He was informed that there was a certain lime tree up the river, and the fruit had the power of healing blindness. He then proceeded up the river and reached the place where the miraculous lime tree stood. He took away some fruits and rode back to his mother whose sight he restored by means of the fairy lime fruit.

The town of Mergui now stands at the place where the prince's horse was tethered, and Tenasserim was built at the place where the fairy lime tree was found. The latter is called *Tenau* in Siamese which means lime fruit. In 1686, Tenasserim town was known to the Siamese simply as 'Tannaw'.‡

The word "Mergui" was a subject of controversy some years ago, but no solution appears to have been arrived at. Evidently "Mergui" is a distorted form of "Mergi" or "Mergy". In the 16th century when the town of Mergui was the terminus of a trade route on the eastern coast [*sic*] of the Malay Peninsula, the channel through which trading vessels came up to the port was on the south-west of the town, and about 12 miles in the same direction from the town there was a small bay called "Merjit Bay" (မာရ္ဂျစ်အော်). Portuguese travellers coming to the port had to cross the bay and naturally called the town after the name of the bay. At this distant date the exact meaning of the word "Merjit" could not be ascertained, but I came across an old Siamese man whose flight of

‡ "Anderson. *English Intercourse with Siam in the 17th Century*, p. 12." - Maung Kyi O. [In fact, lime fruit in Thai is *manao*, not *tanao* (JP).]

imagination took him away to the day when an old Malay named "Maryit" or "Marjit" settled at the mouth of the bay and cultivated the land!

The written history of the Kingdom of Tenasserim seems to have started from the year 735 [ME][349] when the King asked for the assistance of the King of Arakan to fight against the king of Siam who invaded Tenasserim. Having defended his kingdom with success, King Bahika Rājā proceeded to fortify his capital. In the year 1090, during the reign of Udang Bayin, Tenasserim was annexed to Siam and was administered by Governors appointed by the Siamese King for 30 years. During this period no important events were recorded. In the year 1121 [ME] (1759 A.D.) when Phra Palichepadaung was the Governor, Alaungpaya (Alompra) invested the place, drove out Phra Palichepadaung and appointed a Burmese Governor in his place. Three years after, the capital was removed from Tenasserim to Mergui then known as 'Marit Kyun' at the mouth of the river Tenasserim, and the town Myeit-myo was built under the supervision of Governor Udein-Kyaw. Minor improvements of the town were then made by successive Governors, but the limits of the town were extended by Governor Khema Rājā who was appointed by King Hsinbyushin. Hitherto it was inhabited by the people from Tenasserim only, but in 1132 [ME], Khema Rājā brought down the people from the principal villages, such as Pin-O, Kyaukpya, Pagoktaung, Sadein, etc., and they were allotted to different quarters in the town, *e.g.*, those who were brought down from Pin-O, Kyaukpya and small villages along the Myitnge branch of the Tenasserim River were grouped in Myitnge quarter ; those from Pagoktaung, Taungpila and neighbouring villages were placed in Alegyun quarter, and Talaingzu quarter was allotted to those who came from Martaban, etc. Thus Mergui was made up of thirteen wards. 22 Burmese Governors have ruled Mergui in succession, and time appeared to have passed uneventfully until the year 1186 [ME], when during the monsoon news was brought to Mergui of the arrival of the British gun-boats at the mouth of the Rangoon River and of the attack on that place by the

349 [Throughout his article, Maung Kyi O wrote 'B.E.' ('Burman Era') which in modern parlance is the Myanmar Era (ME). This has been substituted to avoid confusion with the Buddhist Era, now usually abbreviated as 'BE'. (JP)]

British. Instructions were received by the Governor Maung Myat Le for the defence of the town. Thereupon he sent messages to Tenasserim and Palaw asking for assistance for the defence. His request was refused and Maung Myat Le made preparations to punish the leaders of these towns for their disloyalty. In the meantime word was brought to him that the governor of Tavoy (Maung Shwe Dok) was captured and taken prisoner by the British through the treachery of the customs officer (Maung Dâ). The Governor of Mergui then set sail for Tavoy with 1000 men and 30 war boats with the view to punish Maung Dâ. While they came near the Tavoy island (Malikyun), they sighted the gunboats and returned to Mergui with all speed and made arrangements for the defence of the town. The British ships came into Mergui port slowly and took up their positions facing the town, when every gun on the shore in charge of some Portuguese was fired. The ships replied with a discharge of broadsides. After three hours of artillery duel the Burmese guns were silenced. The English then landed at the Coal Storage (ကျောက်မီးသွေးရုံ) and fought their way through the town and finally captured the place. The Governor then retired to the village east of the town but four days after he surrendered himself. He and his customs officer (Rushin) were then taken away as prisoners to India. Thus passed the town of Mergui into the hands of the English after 63 years of Burmese rule.‡

MAUNG KYI O

‡ JBRS : "This article has been received independently of Mr. J.S. Furnivall's which follows. The reader is invited to compare it with U Kyaw Din's 'The History of Tenasserim and Mergui' in [JBRS] vol. 7, part iii, pp. 251–4. (*Ed.*)"

Appendix 3

"From the Chronicles of Mergui"

J.S. Furnivall

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I
INTRODUCTION

Little enough is known of the events of 1824–5, and of those which took place in Tenasserim almost nothing. ....[350] Luckily, Maung Shwe Don of Mergui, formerly a *taikthugyi*, has preserved a record of the occurrences at Mergui giving us a detailed history from the Burman point of view.[‡] Before proceeding with the translation one or two remarks are necessary. Firstly, the document is not contemporaneous with the events which it describes. This is clear from the fact that the attacking fleet is said to have entered Mergui "as fast as they could burn coal"; as a matter of fact, however, there were no steam ships in the English fleet. Secondly, the document has been copied and re-copied; that which I saw was probably little more than 20 years old; some of the copyists have used the Mergui

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350 [Mr. Furnivall wrote a rambling introduction. A section has been excised (JP).]

‡ J.S. Furnivall : *"Note.*—The [Burmese language] extract from the Chronicle of Mergui was found among my papers relating to Mergui. It bears no indorsement but appears to have been copied from the palm leaf record lent to me by Mg. Shwe Don, late *taikthugyi.* The discrepancy which may be noticed between the earlier dates may have existed in the original version ; the manuscript copy bears traces of having been compared with the original and a very slight acquaintance with old documents shows that carelessness is no monopoly of the modern clerk."

dialect, in which, among other peculiarities, the sounds of "*it*" and "*et*" are interchanged both in speech and writing; this circumstance, together with numerous mistakes in copying, render much of it difficult to understand; probably also the original writer was not skilled in composition. However, verbal accuracy is not a matter of great importance in such a translation as is now attempted; for the most part I have given the meaning that seemed to be intended, and where the scribe has run right off the rails so that his meaning is quite unintelligible I have just followed him off the rails and on again. A copy of the document is printed herewith and the translation therefore can be checked. Yet the account is substantially accurate, not only in the general outline of the story but in details. Fortunately this can be proved. The selected correspondence in the office of the Commissioner of Tenasserim, recently published by Government, contains the names of all officials at Mergui when the town was stormed.[351] Many of the names are also given in this Burmese record, and there is a large degree of correspondence between the two lists. It is certain therefore that the narrative must have been written or dictated by, or represent the memoirs of, some Burmese officer who took a leading part in the events described.

II

A NARRATIVE OF THE OPERATIONS BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND THE BURMANS UNDER MAUNG MYAT LE

(*translated from the Burmese*)[352]

The Royal Secretary Sanda Dewa arrived in Mergui with the Royal Proclamation notifying that forty English war vessels had arrived in the month of Wagaung 1186 [ME][353] with the intention of attacking Rangoon in Hanthawaddy. The governor thereupon made preparations to resist

351 [Referring to Letter № 8, Commissioner Maingy to Captain Briggs, 30 September 1825, pp. 1–22, in: Burma, *Selected Correspondence* 1928 (JP).]

352 [Because this is a translation, the typesetting has not been reproduced verbatim from the original in the JBRS. (JP)]

353 [ME : as with Maung Kyi O in Appendix 2, the calendar abbreviation has been changed from the Burman Era ('B.E.') to the Myanmar Era (ME) to avoid confusion with the Buddhist Era. (JP)]

the English should they send a fleet to Mergui. He issued from the armoury (*de-wun-taik*) sixty-four cannon, large and small, and a thousand muskets, and had them overhauled so as to be ready for use. He demolished the buildings in the Seiknge quarter and posted there upwards of thirty small cannon which had been made by the town militia. He appointed Rawshin, a Portuguese, with a company of all the *bayingyis* (*feringhis*, *i.e.* Roman Catholics) in the town, to man the guns. The people of Tenasserim instigated by the *kingyi* captain mutinied,[354] but Maung Myat Le directed an expedition against them, brought them into Mergui, made the *kingyi* captain dress in white, and appointed the town clerk to be joint governor of Tenasserim with himself. The people of Palaw also held back in a similar manner after receiving a formal summons to join in the defence. Maung Myat Le therefore led another expedition against these also, and brought into Mergui all the men and women from Palaw. He was arranging for them to perform their share of the defence when news was received that, on the arrival of the English, Maung Da, the port officer of Tavoy, had rebelled, seized the governor, Maung Shwe Dok, made him over to the English, and surrendered the town. The governor, Maung Myat Le, thereupon publicly proclaimed the said port officer, Maung Da, as a traitor who had broken his oath of allegiance, and resolved to attack the English and arrest him. He set out for Tavoy with this intention and was accompanied by a thousand soldiers and upwards of thirty war boats; but at the Mali Islands he was greeted by the news that the English were making for Mergui with eight men-of-war.

On hearing this he returned immediately to Mergui, made arrangements for the performance of propitious ceremonies, and convened a council. This council was attended by the following : the port officer, the *sitkes*, Ko Shwe Kya and Mok-seik, the *akunwun*, Maung Myat Ya, the *akaukwun* Maung Yauk, the scribes Maung Daw and Maung Pein, the town *nakhan*, Maung Lok, the *myothugyi* Maung Sok, the *myosayes* Ko Pan and Ko Myat La, and the headmen of the following quarters of Mergui town : of the Satein quarter Ko Taung, of the Tavoy

354 [KINGYI CAPTAIN : likely the officer in charge of sentries near the ancient capital of Tenasserim. U Gyi Sein located the main guardpost there at Auk Kin, just downriver from the town (see note 143). (JP)]

quarter Ko Po, of the Myitnge quarter Ko Shan, of Alegyun Ko Pon, of Nauklae Ko Pan U. At this council it was arranged that Rawshin *thakin* and the *bayingyis* should man twenty-five cannon; the governor, together with Maung Pein the scribe and Seya Tut U, was posted on the hill with five cannon; the town militia was posted to guard the foreshore camp in the Seik Nge quarter ; Maung Shwe Kya (the *sitke*) was given charge over the area from Nauklae to Wetkaung; the 300 men of Tenasserim were armed with a musket apiece, and posted on the Seyadaw Kyaung Hill in four camps of seventy-five men each, with Maung Myat Ya (the *akunwun*?) as their captain. The arms for the several detachments were then distributed to the officers and the whole force waited in readiness for the attack.

The English men-of-war, nine in number, entered the harbour as fast as coal could bring them at 8 a.m. on the 14th waxing of Thadingyut 1186. A Tavoyan, Maung Kwe Byu, landed, carrying a flag, and presented to the governor, Maung Myat Le, a communication from the admiral of the fleet. The governor had this letter read out in council; it was to the following effect :

> The port officer of Tavoy, Maung Da, having surrendered Tavoy, the English general has promoted him and his family and appointed him to a more eminent position.

Maung Shwe Pu, the son of the said port officer, together with 500 Tavoyans had accompanied the English to Mergui. But the governor, Maung Myat Le, indignantly refused to surrender Mergui, and after the letter had been read out ordered that Kwe Byu together with the flag which he had brought should be made over to the Kala Kwe camp outside the town, and that the captain in charge of that camp should expel him from the town precincts and place him in jail. These orders were carried out and the man was placed in jail accordingly.

At 9 a.m. the vessels cast anchor in line, one at the Stone Jetty, one at the Yesi Well, and one at the Main Jetty. The Burman captains wished to open fire forthwith, but the governor directed them to await his orders. He took his seat beneath two golden umbrellas on the rocky platform below the large pagoda, and ordered that at 10 o'clock, when the battlefield and the whole town were quiet, every cannon in the town should be fired off at the same time.

The men-of-war opened fire simultaneously, and both sides continued firing, until about 3 p.m. During an interval, when the smoke had cleared away, the Burman captains advised resuming the attack from another position. But the governor ordered them to fire another round before moving. After complying with his orders they found that the vessels had suffered greatly, but that the town, which was protected by the hill from the fire of the men-of-war, had only sustained slight damage. The governor therefore came to the conclusion that there was no great cause for anxiety, and directed them to break off for a while and resume operations on the morrow. He left instructions that he was to be called if the Tavoyans attempted an attack by land, and went down the hill to his residence.

But after the Burmans had ceased fire the soldiers from the vessels came to shore in sampans and landed at the coal yard. The captains attacked them, Maung Shan Byu from the Hlegataung, and Maung Mè Tun from the Ma-tha Gate, and drove them back to the wall under cover of which they took shelter. At this stage a heavy rainstorm broke, and the arms and ammunition of the Burmans being exposed to it became damp and could no longer be fired. But the English were protected from the rain by the town wall and were thus enabled to renew their attack against the Burmans from the Ma-tha Gate, who could only defend themselves with spears and *dahs*. Hence they succeeded in forcing their way into the town at a cost of a hundred men.

The governor was informed, and, chiding his informant for the delay in telling him, hurried to the Myitnge quarter where he defeated an attachment of soldiers. But he was attacked by a body of about a thousand English soldiers on the Ashe-kyaung Hill. The Burmans lost heavily, and the governor Maung Myat Le himself made a desperate pesonal resistance, but their muskets were wet and would not fire, and after many of the Burmans had lost their lives Maung Myat Le, without a single follower, managed to escape to Beiktaung, from whence he reached Kalwin where he took refuge.

Four days after the storming of the town the English heard that Maung Myat Le was willing to surrender. Two officers of high rank therefore came to meet him, and brought him to Mergui. On arriving there he learned that the *akaukwun*, Rawshin, and the *bayingyis* had been placed under arrest and were confined in the ships because they

had fired cannon at the attacking force. He explained that this had been done by his orders, saying, "Now that the English have arrested me these other people ought to be set free." On his representation therefore forty-seven men were released but he himself and Rawshin were taken prisoners to India.

III

NOTES

The foregoing narrative amplifies the bare statement of Snodgrass that Tavoy surrendered and that Mergui was taken by storm. The following notes which cast further light upon the matter are taken from a report by Mr. A.D. Maingy, the first civil governor of Tenasserim, published in the volume of *Selected Correspondence* printed by Government in 1916.[355]

The principal officer is described as the *miew-woon*, the governor of the whole province. His name is given as Maung Ya Kle, which it is not easy to reconcile immediately with Maung Myat Le. But Mr. Maingy clearly had a poor ear for Burmese; for example he calls the Kyaukpya River the Goulpia River, and Ya Kle at least resembles Myat Le, as Goulpia resembles Kyaukpya. Mr. Maingy corroborates the narrative as regards the governor being taken prisoner and sent to Calcutta, but adds that his eldest son Kunoon (presumably Ko Nyun) was sent with him. Mr. Maingy gives the ex-governor a good character : "This man was equally distinguished for his mild and good administration as for his attachment to the Court of Ava; he is spoken of with great respect by all the inhabitants of Mergui."

Mr. Maingy gives further information regarding the family :

> The second son Shooea (Shwe Ya?) is still here (*ie.*, in Mergui). He is about twenty-five years old and bears an indifferent character; he is said to have been formerly a patron of a gang of thieves, he now lives with his mother and seems quiet; is married and has a young family. There are also two daughters of the late Miew-woon residing with their mother. One is still a child. The other has been married but separated from her husband before the arrival of the English. The mother is very poor, having been

355 [Burma, *Selected Correspondence* (1928), pp. 21–22 (JP).]

> plundered at the storm. Her eldest son's wife and family reside with her also.

Mr. Maingy recommended that the family should receive a small pension.

Maung Da, or Moungda as Mr. Maingy calls him, was still at Mergui when Mr. Maingy arrived. It appears that he was a native of Tavoy who earned his appointment as *ye-wun* by capturing a Siamese dacoit leader.[356] Mr. Maingy continues :

> He is reckoned a clever man, and was most instrumental in delivering up Tavoy into our hands. He was influenced to this as much from his disaffection to the Miew-woon as from his knowledge of the place not being tenable. Colonel Miles for his services appointed him first rajah, but he was afterwards arrested and confined by Colonel Wolfe for reasons which it is unnecessary to repeat. He was very well affected to us before his arrest, and is so now in all probability as he would no doubt lose his life if he fell into the hands of the King of Ava. He has two wives … three of his sons are with him at Mergui, the fourth, a boy of twelve, is here, residing with his mother and too young to be dangerous, although it is said he has been tampered with by some of those engaged in the late plot … They live retired on the little Maung Dar had.[357] The eldest son is orderly and well behaved. The other two are bad characters and were at the head of gangs of thieves.

The name of Maung Shwe Dok, the governor of Tavoy who was seized by the port officer, is given by Mr. Maingy as Moung Shoedok. According to Mr. Maingy the governor was "of good family in Ava … not reckoned of very great abilities, but extremely avaricious and bent upon making as much money as he possibly could by his situation in which he is accused of great cruelty and oppression. He is said to have realised by his exactions about twenty-five piculs of silver."

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356 [Dacoit capture : some details of this event were recorded by James Low in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, volume 2, № 2 (1835), p. 254 (jp).]

357 [Maung Dar : this same man (also spelled Maungda) led a rebellion against the British at Tavoy in 1829. He was executed after its failure. See note 257 for his role in the 1824 seizures of Dawei and Myeik (jp).]

But this information was presumably obtained from or through Maung Da who could not afford to give a good character to the man whom he had betrayed. As the governor during his period of office executed eleven men for theft, and two of Maung Da's sons patronized gangs of thieves, it is possible that the cruelty and oppression relate to the executions of the thieves.

Mr. Maingy continues :

> He is now a prisoner in Calcutta. It was his wish to have defended this place (Tavoy) against the English but (he) was opposed in his views by the Ye-woon and his party. A scuffle ensued between the two parties in which one of the Ye-woons lost his life. His wife resides here with an infant male child. She is very poor; a son named Moung Pay, about twenty-five years of age, had left the place and gone to Ava before the arrival of the English. This son was married here but had no children. He is separated from this woman and taken another in Ava. Moung Shoedok is strongly attached to Ava.

From the poverty of the ex-governor's family it looks as if the twenty-five piculs of silver must have been mislaid during the scuffle.

The narrative does not mention the name of the port officer of Mergui. According to Mr. Maingy it was a man Moungbo, not of exalted birth and destitute of personal influence. Subsequently he applied for leave to settle at Tenasserim and being of a quiet and inoffensive character received permission. Probably the omission from the narrative of his name and all further mention of him is accounted for by his insignificance. The port officer, or *ye-wun* according to modern transliteration, was variously known to Mr. Maingy as the 'Yea-woon' or the 'Ray-woon'; the *akunwun* also can easily be identified as the 'Ack-hoon-woon', but 'Ack-hao-woon' was the nearest approach that could be made to *akaukwun*, the collector of sea customs. The name of the *akaukwun* is the same in both lists, the narrative gives Maung Yauk, and Mr. Maingy gives Moung-youk; but Moung-Mee-ayuh is a very bad attempt at Maung Myat Ya the name of the *akunwun*. Neither of these seems to have played a leading part in the defence, but Mr. Maingy represents them as influential though of no family, and hostile to the new government.

Of the inferior officials Mr. Maingy only mentions one *sitke*, or 'chey-key', whose name Moungshoo-ee-ah was apparently an attempt at Maung Shwe Kya. The *nakhan* Maung Lok, or Nga Lok can be identified under the name of 'Nullong', and one of the scribes, Maung Pein, is obviously the person intended by Moungbyne, but the other scribe, Maung Daw, cannot be recognised under the style of Moun Ea, as the name of the man who held that office as recorded by Mr. Maingy. The *myothugyi*, 'miewsigee', must be the *myothugyi* of Tenasserim, presumably the successor to the *kingyi bo*, whom Maung Myat Le removed; in Mergui there were five 'soogies' one over each quarter. These quarters are given by Mr. Maingy as Nouley (Nauklae), Alley Choon (Alegyun), Seding (Satein), Mingay (Myit-nge) and Tavoy (Dawei). It is somewhat strange that on this point there should be an agreement between Mr. Maingy and the narrative, because the local chronicle gives a list of wards which agrees much more closely with the divisions recognised at the present day. The Satein ward however which appears in both the above lists and also in the chronicle is no longer known.

With regard to the Portuguese Rawshin I have been unable to obtain any further information; certain Armenian merchants are mentioned by Mr. Maingy, but he is silent concerning the Roman Catholic colony which had been stranded in Mergui for about 200 years. Nevertheless the details given by Mr. Maingy suffice to show that the narrative must have been compiled by someone with first-hand knowledge of the circumstances. Mr. Maingy has left on record similar notes about the taking of Tavoy, and it is to be hoped that for that town also there is some Burmese narrative of the events accompanying the advent of the British, of the scuffle between the parties of the governor and of the port officer, of the appointment of the three rajahs by Colonel Miles, and of the subsequent rebellion.

J.S. FURNIVALL

Appendix 4

British report of the assault of Mergui, 6 October 1824[358]

[*Mergui was seized about a month after Dawei. In the former action, British ships tried to sail up the Dawei River on 8 September 1824 but were hampered by shoals, sunken boats and cannon fire. The formidable brick fort was also well defended by a large population. Any attack would have caused great British loss. On the following morning, however, the town waterways minister sent messengers to arrange surrender. Five years later the same treasonous minister, Maung Da, led an unsuccessful rebellion against the British for which he was executed.*[359] (JP)]

9 October 1824

To Brigadier General Sir A. Campbell, K.C.B. &ca &ca &ca –

Sir,

My despatch of the 27th ultimo will have placed you in possession of the movements of the force under my command up to that period. Having left the detail named in the margins for the temporary protection of Tavoy,[360] the remainder proceeded for the accomplishment of the ulterior object of the expedition on this coast; and I have now the honor to announce to you, the fall of this place, by storm, on the 6th

358 Field report from Mergui : IOR/H/MISC/663, pp. 689–94; also found in: Wilson 1827, № 63(C), p. 69.

359 Tavoy : for the field report see: IOR/H/MISC/663, pp. 684–7; or: Wilson 1827, № 63(B), p. 68. A summary of both actions is in: *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register,* Jan.–June 1825, pp. 759–61.

360 Margin note : "...Cruizer *Mercury* ... Troops ... File 370 ... Gun Boats."

Instant, the day we arrived before it; my first care was to send a summons to the town for its unconditional surrender, but instead of a reply, at half-past eleven o'clock, their guns opened a heavy fire upon the Honorable Company's cruizers, who had previously taken their position in front of the enemy's batteries, mounting thirty-three pieces of heavy ordnance. The practice on our part was so good that in about one hour the whole were silenced.

During this period as many troops had been assembled in the boats of the fleet as they could contain, and I directed a landing to be effected to the right of the town.

This movement was immediately followed up, by the advance of a party of His Majesty's 89th Regiment to the gate of the stockade, under a heavy and well-directed fire from the enemy, and it was at this spot the greater loss was sustained. The ground for some distance between the river and the stockade was deep mud, and water, and from the moment the disembarkation commenced the rain poured down in torrents; under these disadvantages, the troops maintained their ground with the greatest steadiness, and as soon as it was possible to bring up the ladders, an escalade was ordered and carried promptly, and most gallantly into effect by His Majesty's 89th Regiment; from this instant the enemy gave way; their loss is said to be about 500 men.

The Raja remained till we were actually in the town, and then withdrew with about 300 of his followers on the opposite site. More than common attention had been paid in arranging the defence of the place and the natural strength of the ground gave the greatest advantage to them. Their batteries were placed on the brows of different hills, commanding the shipping completely. From the best information I have been able to collect, the enemy had 3,500 men in arms; on our first gaining possession, the whole population fled, but in the course of that night, and the following morning great numbers came in, and are now following their several avocations. About one hundred men belonging to Tenasserim, I have detained in confinement ; and as that place has lost all its former consequence, and is at present nothing beyond a fishing village, this body forms half its force.

A copy of my orders issued on this occasion, and the return of killed, wounded, and missing as also of the ordnance, ammunition and stores, are herewith transmitted.

The whole of this affair has proved so decisive, and the gallant and exemplary conduct of every individual so prominent, that I feel at a loss how to bring individual instances of merit forward. I, however, have much pleasure in recording the names of Lieutenant Colonel Commandant McDowall of the 7th Regiment Madras Native Infantry, Major Basden commanding His Majesty's 89th Regiment, Captain Russel commanding detachment Bombay Artillery, serving on board the Honorable Company's cruizer *Thetis*, and Lieutenant Cotton of the Engineers, to the whole of whom I feel most obliged. The attention of Mr. Staff-Surgeon Smart was unremitted in his department.

To my own Staff, Captain Young, of His Majesty's 89th Regiment Brigade Major, and Captain Spicer, of the 12th Regiment Madras N. I. Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, I am much indebted for their assistance and the promptitude with which they performed and executed every wish of mine, not on this occasion alone, but in all situations in which they have been employed under my command, and I beg leave to recommend them, in the strongest manner to your favourable notice, and protection.

There being many points which it is necessary to communicate to you, I have felt the necessity of sending my brigade major, Captain [Plomer] Young, with this dispatch, who, possessing my full confidence will develope to you personally every transaction that has occurred, and the view I have taken of the state of these conquests.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
your most obedient humble servant

G. Miles

Lieutenant Colonel Commanding the Force

Abstract of Ordnance, &c. &c. captured at Mergui, 12th October 1824

Grand total

ordnance, iron, of sorts	37	
swivels, iron and brass	106	
total	143	
Total of round shot, iron, of different sizes	800	
brass	21	
iron bars, welded two shot	200	
grape shot, fixed	27	
balls musquet leaden or tin	300	
musquets	668	
blunderbusses	6	
swords country	48	
spears	110	
powder	200	pounds
standards	33	

General Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing,

in the Force under the Command of Lieutenant-Colonel Miles, C. B., in the Assault of Mergui, on the 6th October 1824.

His Majesty's 89th Regiment

killed — 6 privates

wounded — 2 lieutenants, 7 sergeants, 2 corporals, 13 privates

missing — 1 Bheastee

names of officers wounded

Lieutenant William Kennedy, severely

Lieutenant Patrick McKie, slightly

Appendix 5

Places listed in Chapter Nine

limits of the Kingdom of Tanintharyi

north	Mee Laung Chaung	a creek 24 km south of Palaw GPS 12.75, 98.72
northeast	Khamaungthwe Chaung	the main tributary of the Greater Tenasserim River, where it enters the river proper near Myitta. GPS 14.164, 98.526
east	Win Phalone	perhaps a stockade or valley along the western border of Thailand in Phetchaburi or Ratchaburi province; see note 81.
southeast	Tharlin city	possibly Jalinga; see notes 81 & 203. near GPS 11.86, 99.48
south	Sai-la	possibly Kanmaw Island, called 'Shayan' by the Moken, GPS 11.68, 98.48
west	Kunthee Kunywet Island	Hayes and Fletcher Islands, GPS 11.85, 97.66

SATELLITE TOWNS ESTABLISHED BY BAHIKA RAJA IN 1373 CE (GPS)

Palaw : 12.98, 98.64

Palauk : 13.27, 98.62

Myeik Taung : 12.439, 98.6094 (also the tomb of Shayk Baba)

Thay-ma Taung : probably Tawkyaung Taung, in Myeik at 12.436, 98.60

Taung Pi-lar : 12.37, 98.74

Ka-lin-ban : now called Kinso, an area centered at 12.410, 98.767

Ta-nyet : 12.429, 98.802

Ta Mote : around 12.576, 98.718, also spelled Tamot

Pyin-win : near 12.29, 98.80 ; residents of Mingok call both the area and its old Shan phaya "Pyin Wun." On the U.S. Army map "Mergui" (1962), village named 'Pyinwun' is nearby.

Pan-thong Taung : possibly the hill near Maunglaw at 12.33, 98.74

Tha-note : later called Tawnauklae, at 12.343, 98.676

Locations upstream from Tanintharyi city

(GPS)

Sa-tein Thaung : 12.097, 99.034

Ma Ma Thaung : 12.11, 99.034

Thutaw Ngo : unknown

Banlaw : 12.11, 99.053

Banlin : 12.122, 99.066

Thamee Hla : 12.163, 99.06 (eastern side)

Wun Nar : 12.22, 98.07

Kyauk Sayit : 12.234, 99.052

old kyaung across the river : 12.231, 99.05

Ta-ku : 12.26, 99.04

old zedi, Ta-ku Nge : 12.2376, 99.0417

Ta-ku Gyi Kyaung : 12.264, 99.051

La Mine Htaw : 12.283, 99.045 ('La Maing Kawt' or 'Lamaingkaw')

Ta Ra Bwin : 12.29, 99.034

Padamya : 12.291, 99.058 (church)

Tha Htay Kwin : 12.346, 99.125

Leik Sein : probably 12.392, 99.103 ('Lakyin' on 1942 War Office maps)

Ye Pu : 12.411, 99.103, according to older British maps; some modern maps differ.

Hein Lek : 12.422, 99.096 ('Hein Lat' or 'Heinla')

Kaw Nga Pyin : 12.448, 99.086 ('Kawt Ma Pyin')

Kyauk Sin : 12.537, 99.027 ('Kyauksaing')

Pa Kek : unknown; perhaps now called Pa Wut at 12.555, 99.018

Paung Seik : unknown; perhaps near 12.572, 99.034

Pyaung Chaung : unknown; perhaps now called Pa Wa Chaung

Ma Yone : 12.6, 99.05 ('Ma Rone')

Sa Le Taung : unknown; perhaps in the disturbed earth at 12.645, 99.018

Tat Mu : 12.67, 99.009

Nga Thay : unknown

Byat Aaw : unknown

Byat Htaung : unknown

Kyauk Ka Din : unknown

Za Like Pon : unknown

San Pi Chaung : the tributary that flows from the south to meet the Tenasserim River at 12.74, 98.939. British-era maps show a village called 'Sanpe' around 12.70, 98.94

Kyauk Lone Gyi : 12.74, 98.939

Tee : 12.755, 98.932 ('Ti Ywa', or 'Ti-yua')

Ta Loke Chaung : unknown; but perhaps near Ti Wa Shout Kone village, 12.77, 98.918

Sin Ma Kyun : 12.806, 98.945

Sa La Wa : 12.83, 98.942 ('Sa Ra Wa')

Pe Taung : possibly near 12.95, 98.93 ('Peittauk' : abandoned)

Thinbaw Oo : 12.927, 98.956

Hpa Chaung : unknown

Phaya Htan : unknown; several places share this name, but one on the upper Tenasserim River is not currently known.

Kya Kep Da Ye : unknown; possibly 'Kyaukpa' at 13.083, 98.98

Yan Wa : 13.22, 98.985 ('Yangwa'; also another location 2.5 km upstream)

Ta Ra Zin : 13.31, 99.958

Ta Ra Zu : 13.28, 98.97 (abandoned)

Thingan Ngote : a map in the 1920 *Gazetteer* has this roughly at 13.324, 99.00, where there is cleared land.

Aung Thawara city : the *yazawin* gives conflicting locations for this important place. It is first located near Padamya, about 30 km upriver from Tanintharyi town. Later chapters have it over a hundred km further north. Notably, U.S. Army map "Palauk" (1959) shows "Aungthawara" at GPS 13.33, 99.0. The location was confirmed in 1943 by H.B. Beresford-Barrett, a British forestry officer who called it "difficult almost uninhabited country". He further noted that the stretch of river just south of the rapids "had a fair population, mainly of bad characters, who smuggled both ways over the Yuga Taung route to Siam." (Beresford-Barrett 1943, pp. 1–2). This probably meant Yegyo Taung (GPS 12.724, 99.2545 on the "Hua Hin" map). It connects with the rugged Kaeng Krachan watershed. Whether the modern map accurately reflects the ancient site is unknown.

Mei Ngaw : a 1962 U.S. Army map has 'Min-ngaw' at 13.396, 99.003, which accords with the upstream progression of the list; but MIMU map "Tanintharyi Township" (2016) has a 'Mei Ngaw' on the left bank of the river across from Ta Ra Bwin at 12.29, 99.04.

Mei Pya : a peak named 'Mebya Taung' is on the Thai-Burma border at 13.348, 99.206, according to U.S. Army map "Thonburi" (1962). The district on the Thai side is called 'Tanao Si'. It appears to offer access to the Tenasserim River from Ratchaburi province.

Thong Taung Ka Tin : unknown

Thamine : unknown

Ahtoo : unknown

Ayu : 13.65, 99.03 (abandoned for a new site across the river)

Amya : 13.82, 99.00

Sinphyu Che Taing : 14.04, 98.89 (also spelled Sinbyudaing, or 'white-elephant hitching post')

Metta city : 14.164, 98.526 (now called Myitta)

Kyauktone : unknown

Zinme city : Chiang Mai

Thanlwin River : Salween River

FOURTEEN SATELLITE TOWNS OF TANINTHARYI CITY (GPS)

upstream on the Greater Tenasserim River :

Ban Lauk city, now Banlaw village : 12.11, 99.053 Brick and laterite ruins show that the town was divided into several areas)

Ta Ra Bwin city, now Tha Ra Bwin village : 12.29, 99.034

Old Aung Thawara city : unknown; perhaps near Padamya (GPS 12.291, 99.058), or at GPS 13.33, 99.0 as seen on U.S. Army map "Palauk" (1959); see the entry in the previous section.

Kyauk Pan city, now Kyar Gaung village : 12.283, 99.11

Ran Bi city, now Ta Ra Zin : 13.31, 99.958

Myat Bi city, now Sinphyu Che Taing : 14.04, 98.89

on the Lesser Tenasserim River :

Lel Taung city, now Lel Taung village : 12.062, 99.00

Nyunt Bun city now Nyaung Pin Kwin village : 12.05, 99.1

Theinkun city now Theinkun village : 11.88, 99.15
'Theinkun' is a Myanmar pronunciation of 'Singkhon' (**ด่านสิงขร**), which is the Thai name for the border area west of Prachuap. [NS/JP]

downstream on the Greater Tenasserim River :

old Mawton city, called Ban Shaung : 12.125, 98.956

Singu city : near 12.22, 98.91 ; now called Sindin.

Sin Tote city, now Than Doke village or Tawnauklae : 12.344, 98.678

Mareik, now called Myeik : 12.44, 98.6

Pula Yeikkha State, now Palaw : 12.98, 98.64

Appendix 6

Places named in the Fifth Book

(GPS; in the order given by the text)

Kalwin village : 12.46, 98.60

Kalwingyar Falls / Gyar Twin : now a pond at 12.4687, 98.6042

Yaybongyi : centered around 12.457, 98.605

Tat Pyin : a ward in north Myeik around 12.451, 98.602

Myeik Taung : 12.439, 98.6094

Kyandaw : towards Myeik airport around 12.447, 98.615

Boke Chaung village : 12.453, 98.632

Shan Chaung : two creeks have this name, one at 12.445, 98.66, and the other at 12.45, 98.64

Sandawut village : 12.476, 98.675

Shwe Pay village : 12.466, 98.652

Pyin Taung Phaya : either at 12.394, 98.794, or perhaps meaning Pataw Hill at 12.456, 98.577

Ywathit village : 12.465, 98.684

Bangla Taung : probably at 12.46, 98.668 ; also called Bo or Mee Pya Taung, or Lighthouse Hill

Thinbaw Hmauk : unknown, but perhaps in the narrows at 12.487, 98.72

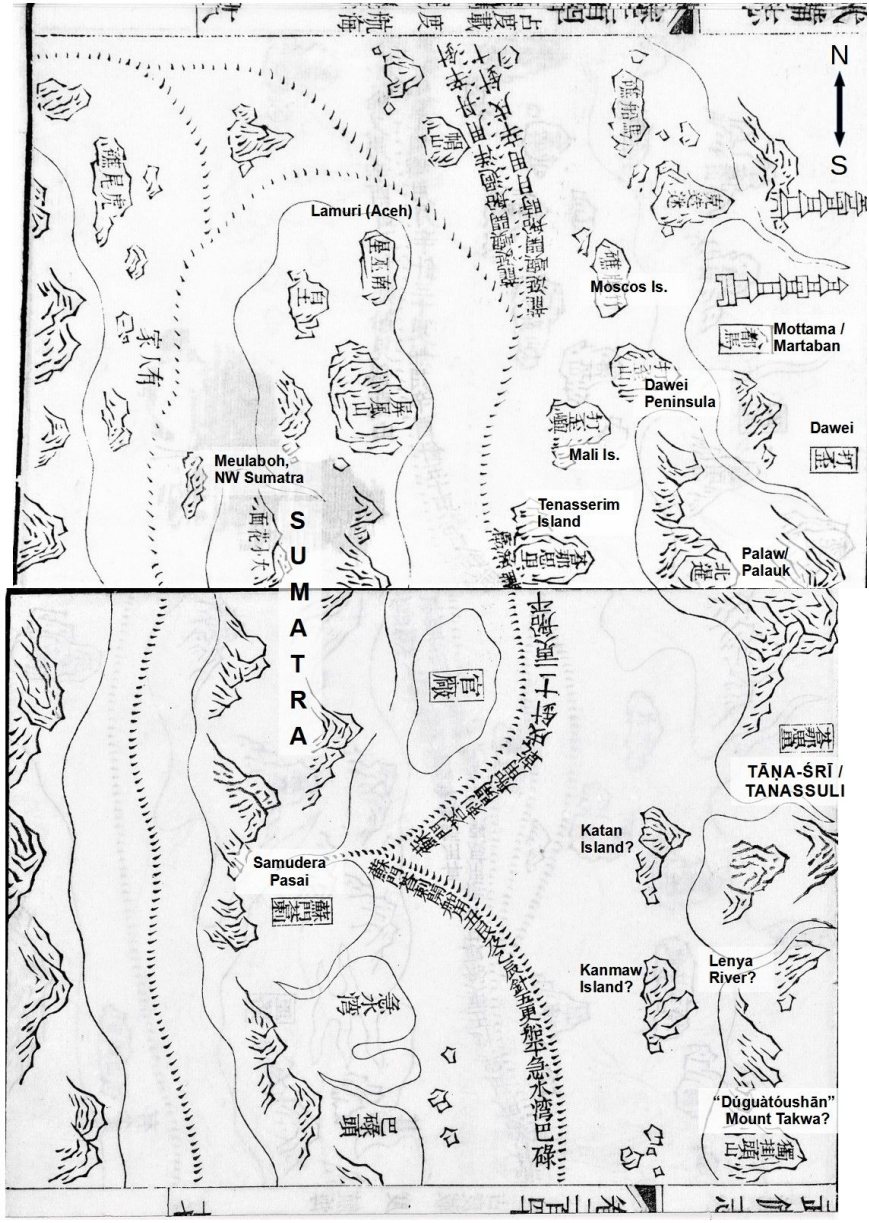
Also:

Zedawun Taung : 12.355, 98.714

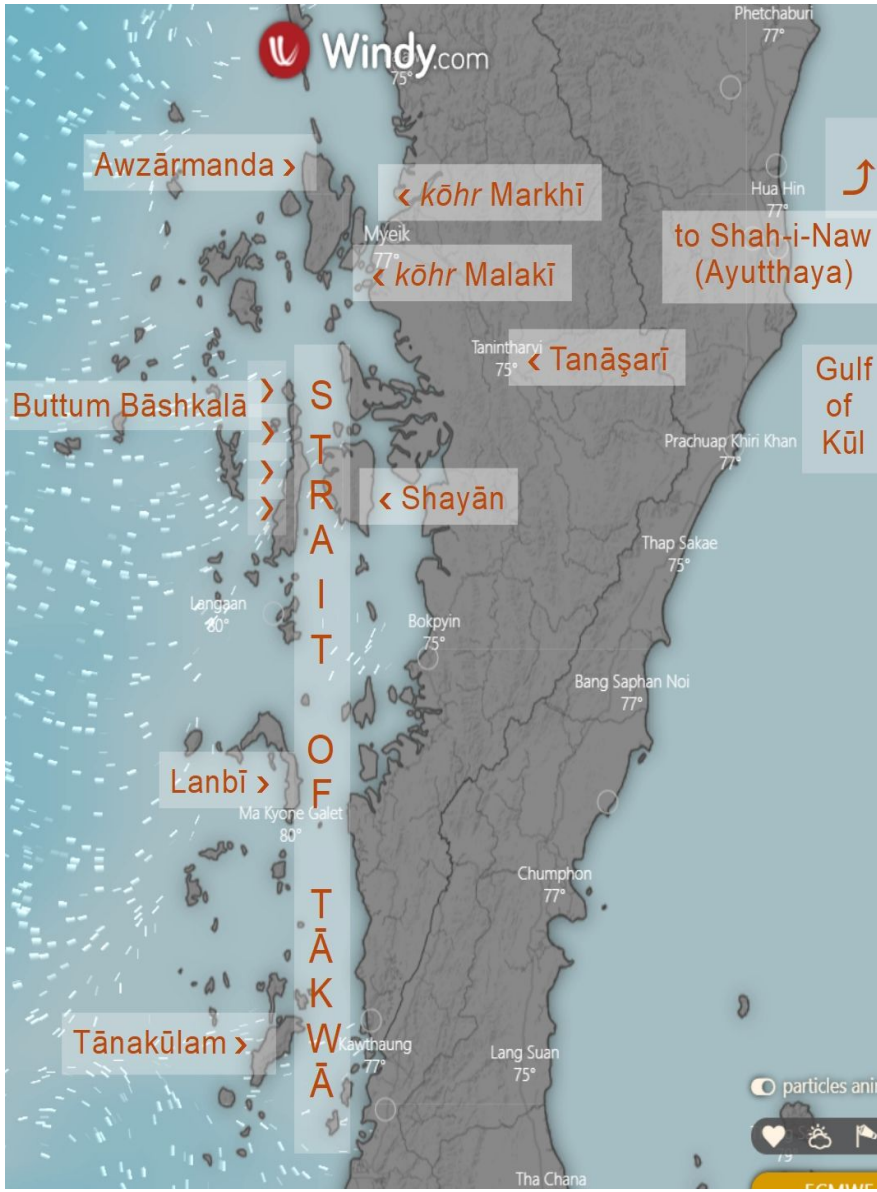
Sadein Bokpyin : 11.384, 98.703

Appendix 7 : maps

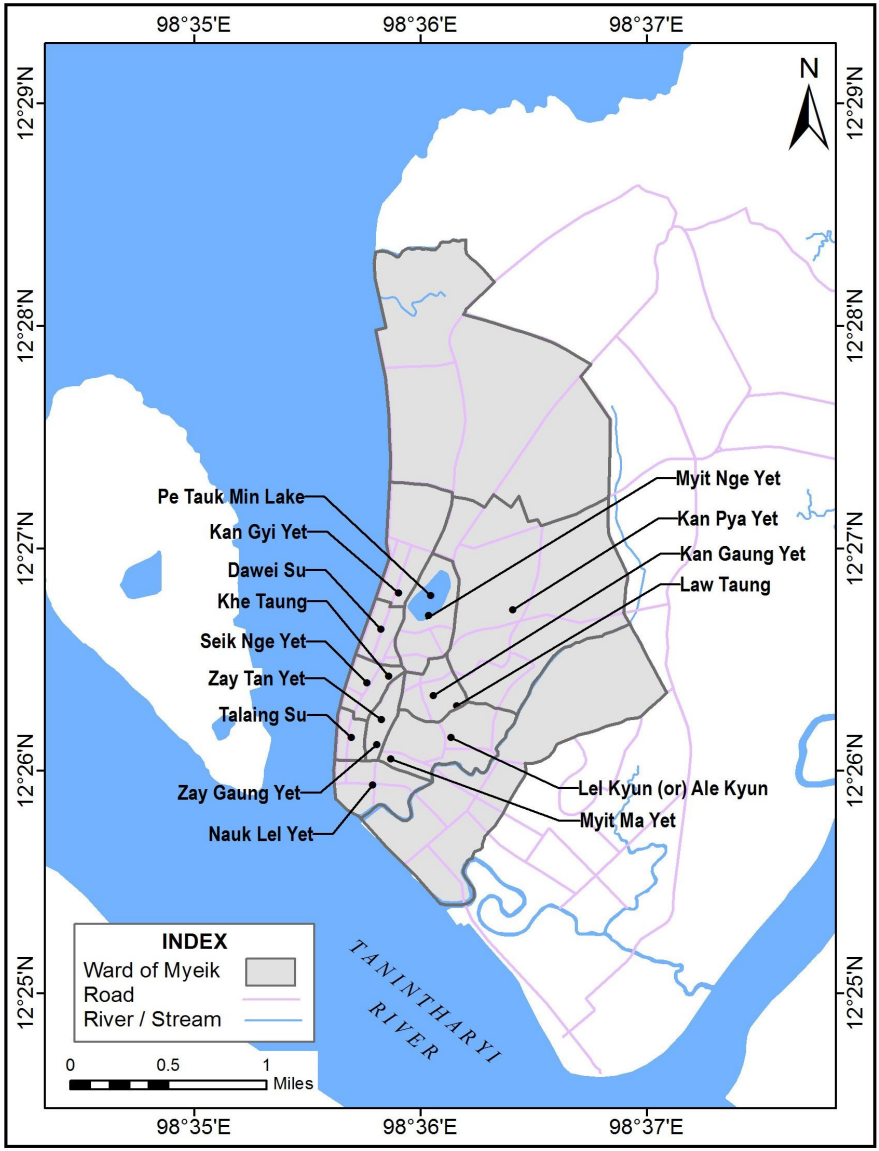
possible extent of the Kingdom of Tāṇa-sirī, c. 1400,
based on boundaries listed in the Tanintharyi Yazawin



Tenasserim, Sumatra and the Strait of Melaka
in the Wu Bei Zhi, 15th Century
Labels applied by the editor [jp]
based on the work of Mei-Ling Hsu (1988).

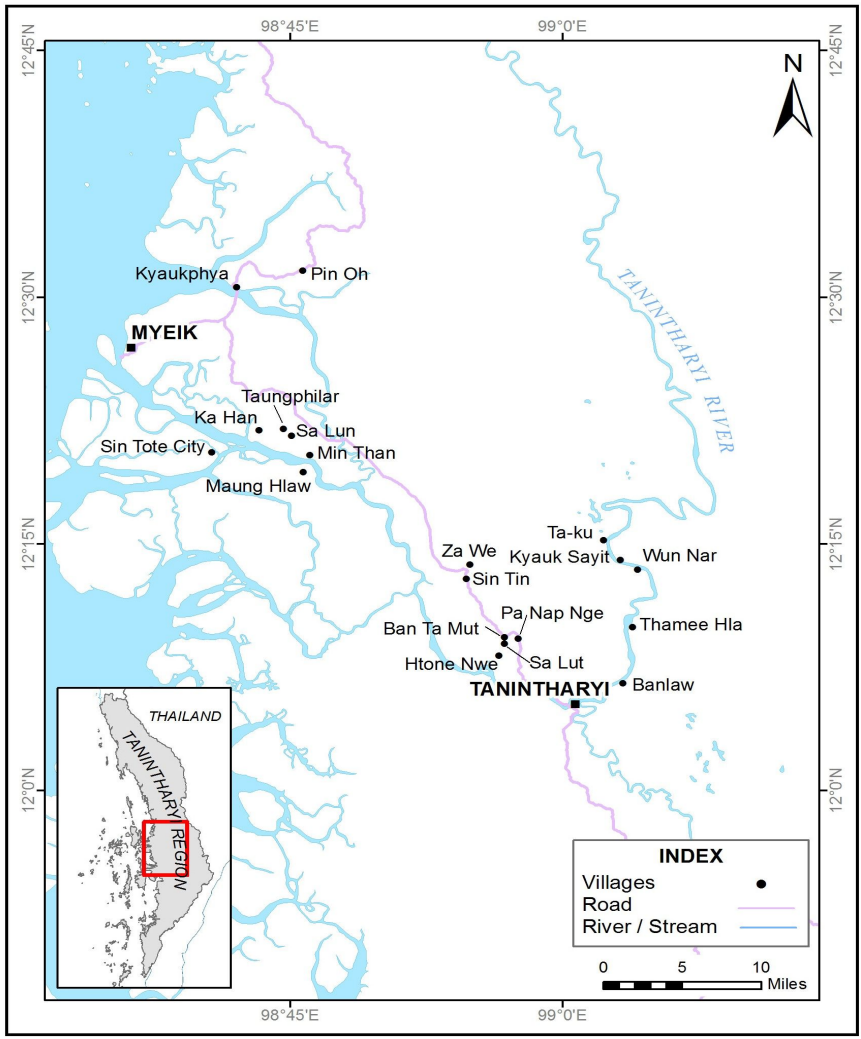


Juzur al-Tākwā and Tākwā Bari, c. 1500 ce
(the Mergui Archipelago and Strait of Takwa, or Forrest's Strait)
as known to the Arab navigators,
mu'allim Shihāb al-Dīn Ahmad ibn Mājid
and Sulaimān bin Ahmad al-Mahrī



Myeik wards and their regional origins
as established in 1531 ce

maps courtesy of
Naing Win Tun, Kinter Digital Printing, Myeik



REGIONAL ORIGIN	WARD IN MARIT
Banlaw, Thamee Hla, Wun Nar, Kyauk Sayit, Taku, etc.	Myit Ma Yet
Lesser Tenasserim River (south of Tanintharyi city)	Seik Nge Yet
Za We, Sindin, Ban La Mut, Sa Lut, Pap Nap Nge, Hton Nwe	Myit Nge Yet
Kangyi Yet, Ka Han, Sa Lun, Min Than, Maunglaw, etc.	Lel Kyun
Shwe Dote, Than Doke (Sin Tote city)	Nauk Lel (-lae) Yet
Dawei	Dawei Su
Ye, Mawlamyine (Mon people)	Talai(g) Su
Kanmaw Kyun and other islands ('Kathae' people)	Kathae Su*

*Kathae Su was built on stilts over mudflats west of town; it no longer exists.

The Myeik Stockade

Myeik had wood-and-brick palisades rather than stone walls. The first was built under Thai orders in 1531 CE. It was about four meters tall with five gates: "one with brick steps leading to the jetty near the Catholic church between Seik Nge Yet and Talai Su Yet, the second to the south of the Wut Taik Monastery, the third near the lake embankment leading to Phaya Kaing village, a fourth near what is now called Mandalay Monastery, and a fifth gate, which was used for funerals, between Shwe Kyaung Hill and Khe Hill." (see notes 112–114). We can further judge the approximate shape by noting the wards that were listed outside the palisade: Nauklae, Phaya Kain, Talai Su, Seik Nge, Dawei Su and Myit Nge.

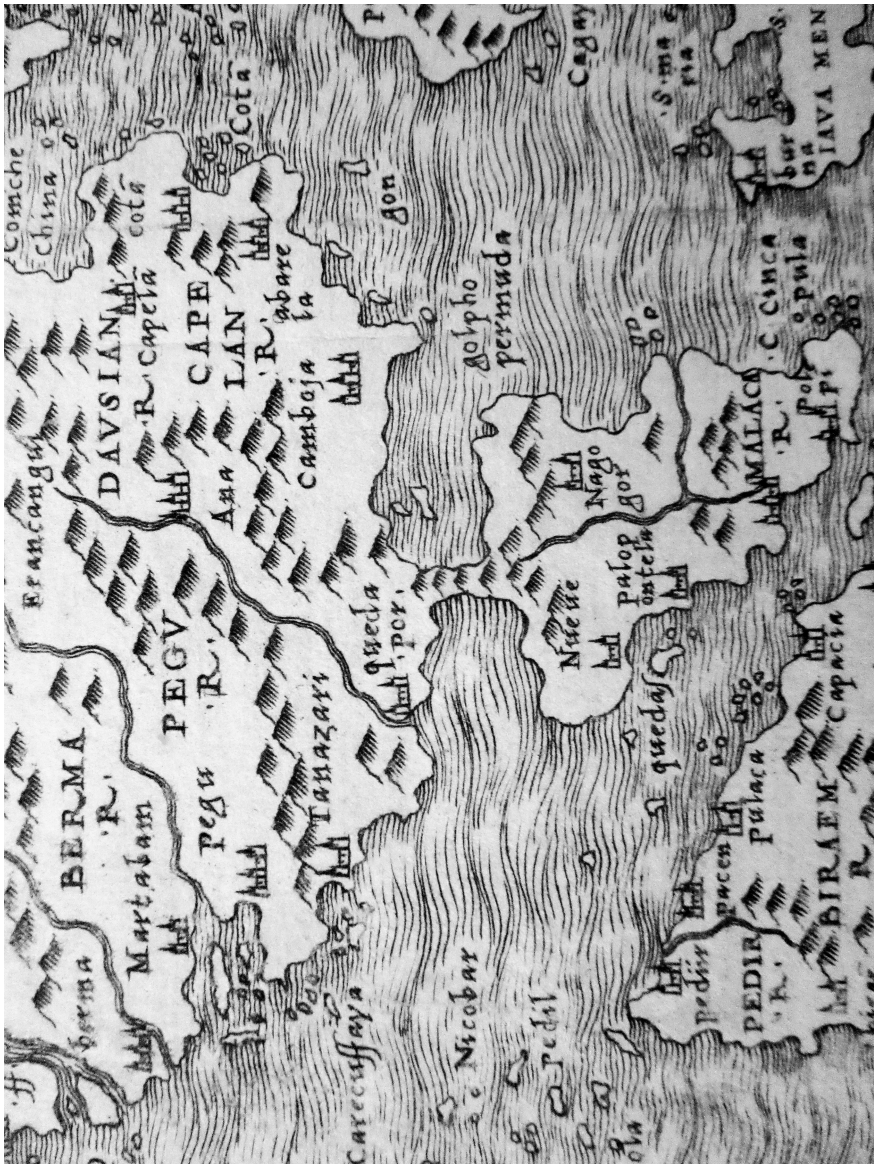
In 1762, the Burmese built their own version, though it may have been built atop the old one. It was about 3.6 kilometers in circumference and had eight gates (see notes 278–9). Both likely had moats as well, because a ditch-and-wall were the most effective defense for any town in the pre-modern era.

In 1825, James Low viewed the stockade and wrote:

> The town is inclosed by a pretty Strong Stockade formed of whole trees. The chief entrance is by a weak brick gateway on the River Side; there are many inferior gates along the other faces. It figure is very unequal and approaches to an oblong square. At its various angles are badly constructed Brick Bastions. The Bricks have here, as in almost every Burman building, been put together with a Cement of Clay alone. It may be observed that the bricks of this Country are considered very durable. (IOR/H/MISC/674, p. 339)

No trace of the structures has been found, though nobody ever looked. Using the text, travelers accounts, geographical features, British records, current roads and community knowledge, we can at least speculate on their location, with hopes that future excavation will discover the brick features. [JP/NS]

POSSIBLE LOCATION OF THE STOCKADE OF MARIT/MYEIK,
C. 1531/1762



DETAIL OF: "INDIA TERCERA NOVA TABULA," GASTALDI, 1548.

This map represents a hybrid of the Ptolemaic tradition dating back to that geographer's work in the 2nd century CE, and new information slowly emerging from Portuguese and other European travelers in the 16th century. The narrow neck of the Malay Peninsula belongs to both camps (see following pages). It seems to be located at the Isthmus of Kra, though 'queda por'[tuguesa?] is unidentified. Kedah proper is clearly located in its correct position further south.

DETAIL OF: "INDES ORIENTAL: LES OU DU GANGE," ORTELIUS, C. 1590.

The deep indentation on the peninsula represents the perception that Tenasserim was the shortest way across the Malay Peninsula, and the fact that ships could navigate most of the way. 'Ciu' is Kui; 'Lugor' is Nakhon Si Thammarat; and 'Legor' is located by subsequent maps as lying just southwest of Mergui ('Mirgim'). This was almost certainly the 'Lynguo' mentioned by Fernão Nunes in 1527 (see the introduction, p. xxiv, and note 282). The town disappeared from European maps during the 17th century. Map courtesy of Dr. Dawn Rooney.

"Descriptio Malaccæ," Hondius, c. 1616

The indentation at Tenasserim has become an inland sea, again reflecting the ability to sail upriver. Also note several towns whose names may be derivatives of *linga*, perhaps as remnants of Shaivite cults from earlier centuries: Langor, Langonia, Luga, Lungam & Lugor. Kui is shown as a major town comparable to Mergui.

DETAIL OF: "INDIÆ ORIENTALIS NOVA DESCRIPTIO," JANSSON, 1630

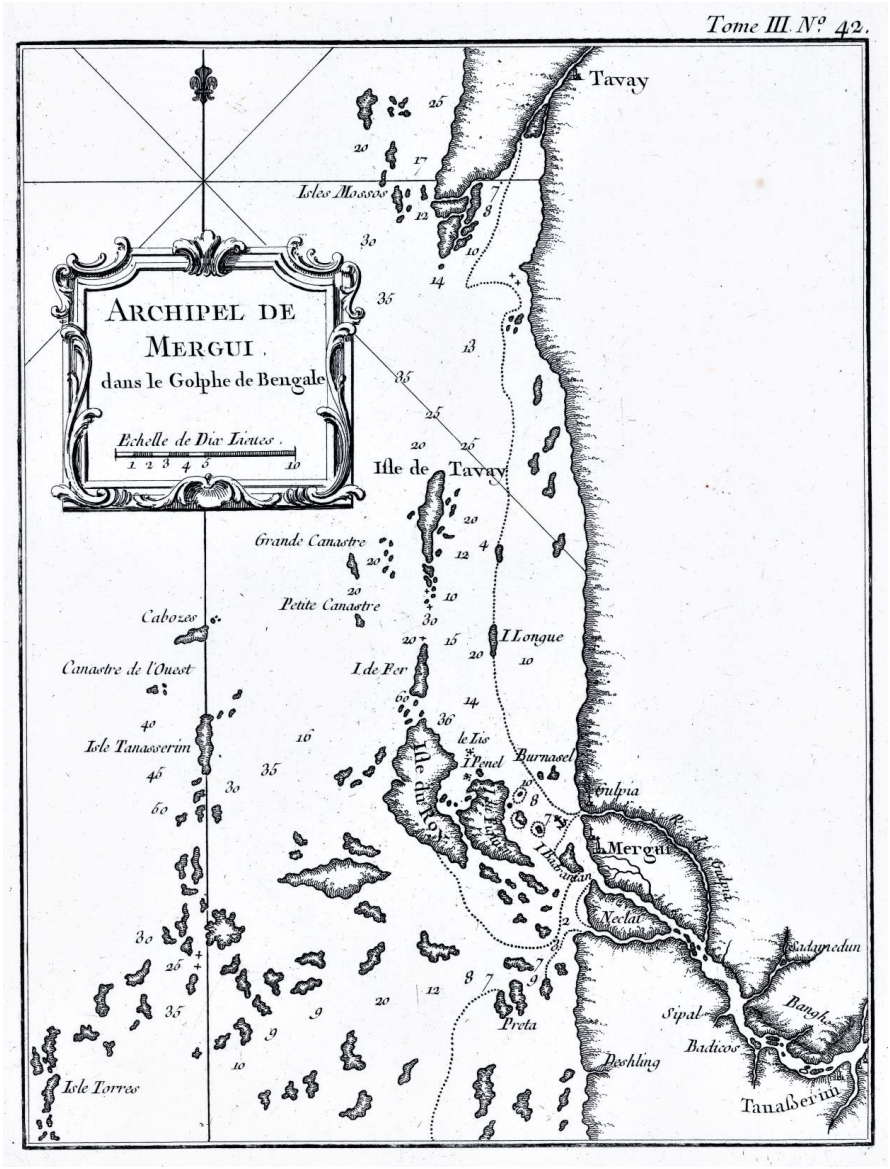
The town of Lugor near Mergui has disappeared, and the geography of the map has improved. However, without a means of accurately judging longitude, the 'inland sea' of Tenasserim persists as a navigator's perception. If anything, the overland crossing has narrowed significantly as trade to Ayutthaya began to flourish.

DETAIL OF: "ROYAUME DE SIAM...," VINCENZO CORONELLI, C. 1690

The 'inland sea' persisted on French maps through the 1670s, then disappeared a decade later. Hypothetically, the Jesuit priest-astronomers at King Narai's court revealed it as an error in the 1680s. In general, Père Coronelli's map shows dimensions and town locations with reasonable accuracy, though a few anachronisms remain. For example, *Ciudad de los Reyes* ('City of the Kings') still reflects the phonetic confusion of the Iberian word for king with the town of Ye when spoken with an archaic Myanmar accent ('Ré'). Also note the error of calling the Lenya River the 'Riviere de Tanasserim'. Intriguingly, the 'Royaume de Tanasserim' is shown as a tributary kingdom of Ayutthaya, not as an integrated province.

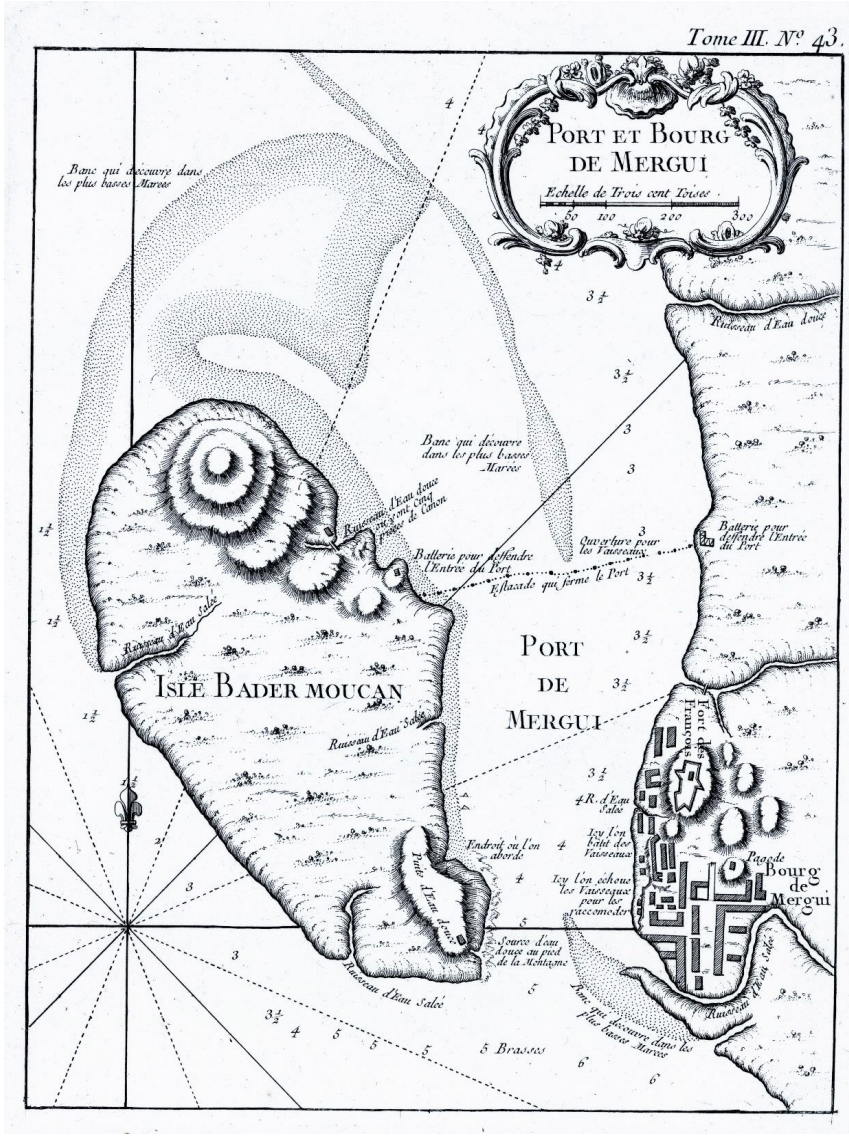
DETAIL OF : "ATCHIN LANGS MERGU EN PEGU NA BENGALEN," DE HAAN, 1761

Early navigators like *mu'allim* ibn Mājid trusted poetic sailing directions and their own skill to navigate the Mergui Archipelago. They had little choice; the maze of islands confounded cartographers through the 1850s. A map of the Bay of Bengal in Gerrit de Haan's *Ligtende Zee Fakkel* shows how difficult the task was. The sizes and shapes of the islands are very distorted, though the soundings and rumb lines likely assisted sailors in finding the *Tākwā Bari* and other sheltered passages.



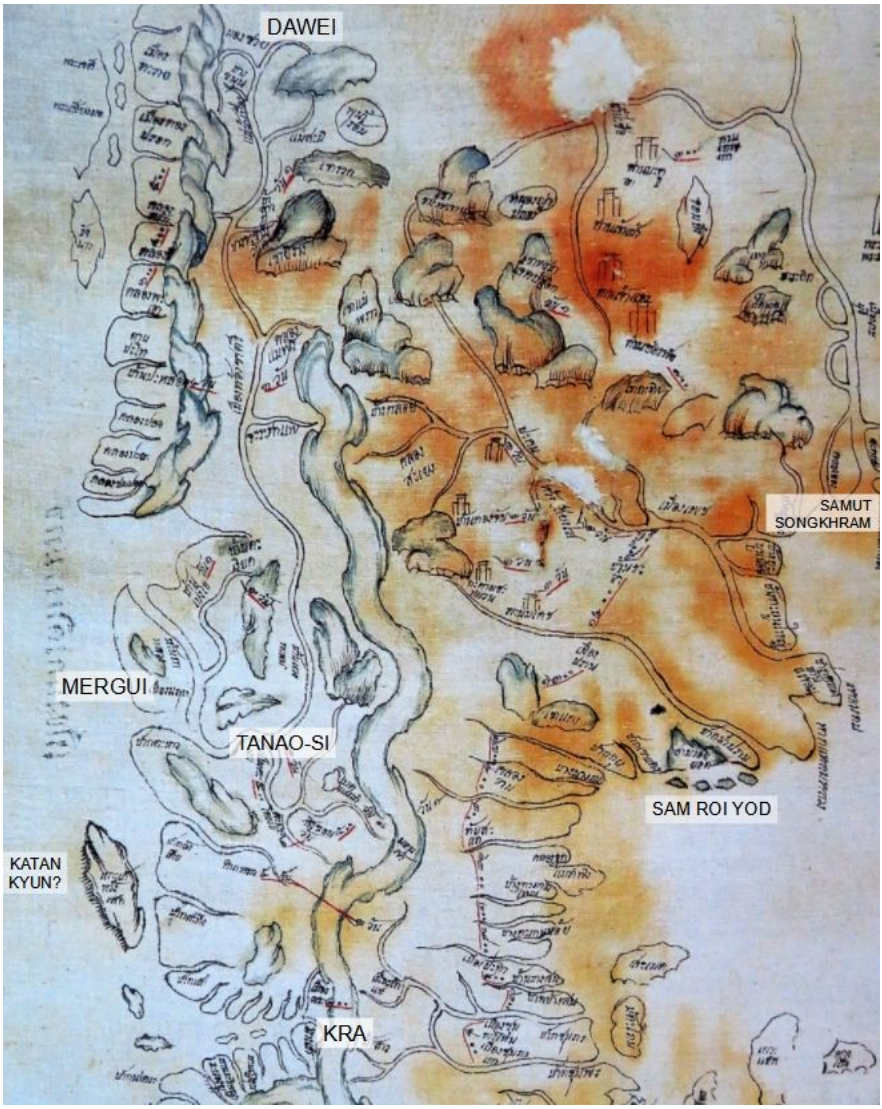
"Archipel de Mergui," Jacques-Nicholas Bellin, 1764

This map reflects cartographic advances during the European Enlightenment (compare it to the modern chart on p. 189). The soundings in fathoms were likely measured systematically, and many islands approach their actual shape. Others, such as the complex Doun Archipelago southwest of Isle du Roy, were not fully charted until after 1945. Note that when the map was published the area had already been seized by Myanmar. Map courtesy of Dr. Dawn Rooney.


Tome III. N° 43.
PORT ET BOURG DE MERGUI
Echelle de Trois cent Toises
50 100 200 300
Banc qui découvre dans les plus basses Marées
Ruisseau d'Eau douce
Banc qui découvre dans les plus basses Marées
Ruisseau d'Eau douce
Batterie pour défendre l'Entrée du Port
Ouverture pour les Vaisseaux
Batterie pour défendre l'Entrée du Port
Eschafaut qui ferme le Port
Ruisseau d'Eau salée
ISLE BADER MOUCAN
PORT DE MERGUI
Fort des François
Ruisseau d'Eau salée
R. d'Eau Salée
Endroit où l'on aborde
Ici l'on bâtit des Vaisseaux
Ici l'on échoue les Vaisseaux pour les raccommoder
Pagode
Bourg de Mergui
Petite Rivière d'Eau douce
Source d'eau douce au pied de la Montagne
Ruisseau d'Eau Salée
Banc qui découvre dans les plus basses Marées
5 Brasses

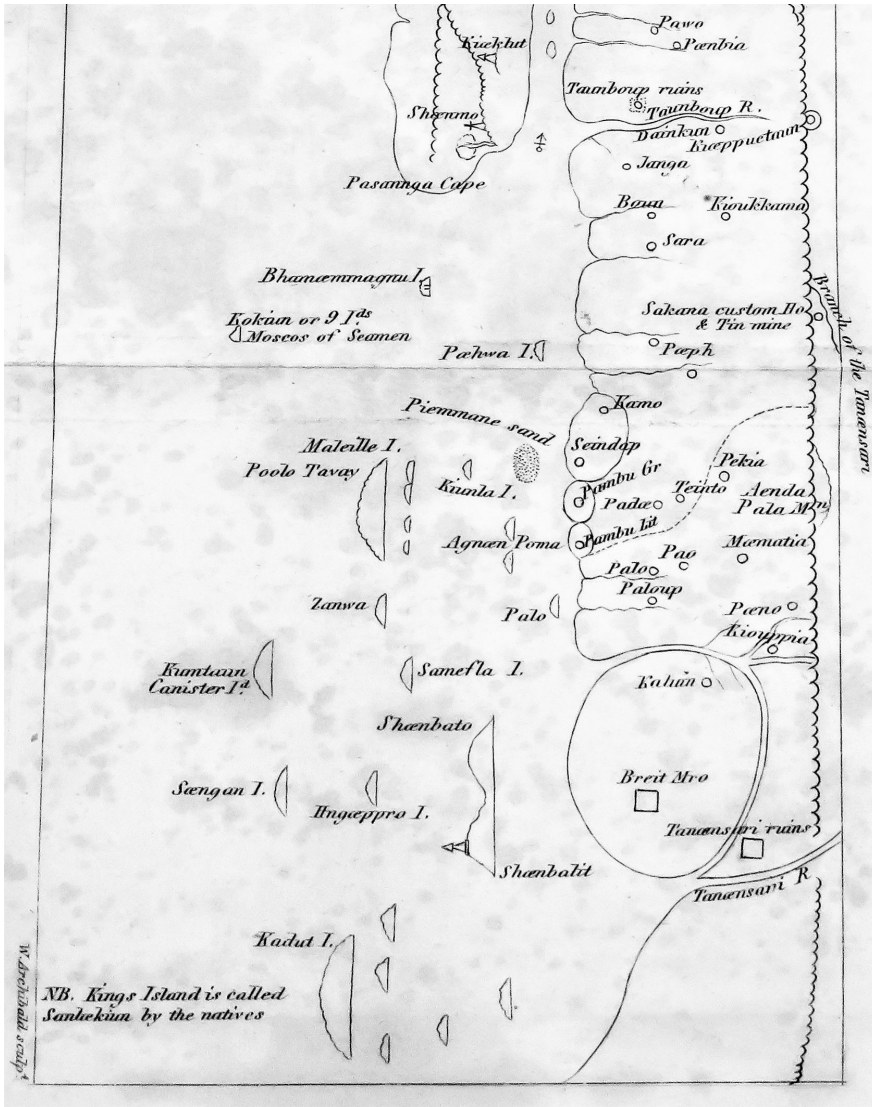
"Port et Bourg de Mergui," Jacques-Nicholas Bellin, 1764

The landforms of this map are easily recognizable to current residents of Myeik, though the names have changed. 'Fort des François' is on Khe Taung, and in fact was never a completed fort under the French. 'Isle Bader Moucan' refers to Badrmacan, the maritime saint whose shrine still exists on the north point of the island (note 35 and photo, p. 113). The island is now called Pataw-Patit Kyun. Of particular importance to sailors were sources of water, both *douce* (fresh) and *saleé* (salt). So were the defensive positions guarding the entrance, though they were ineffective against Alaungpaya's invasion by land in 1760. Map courtesy of Dr. Dawn Rooney.



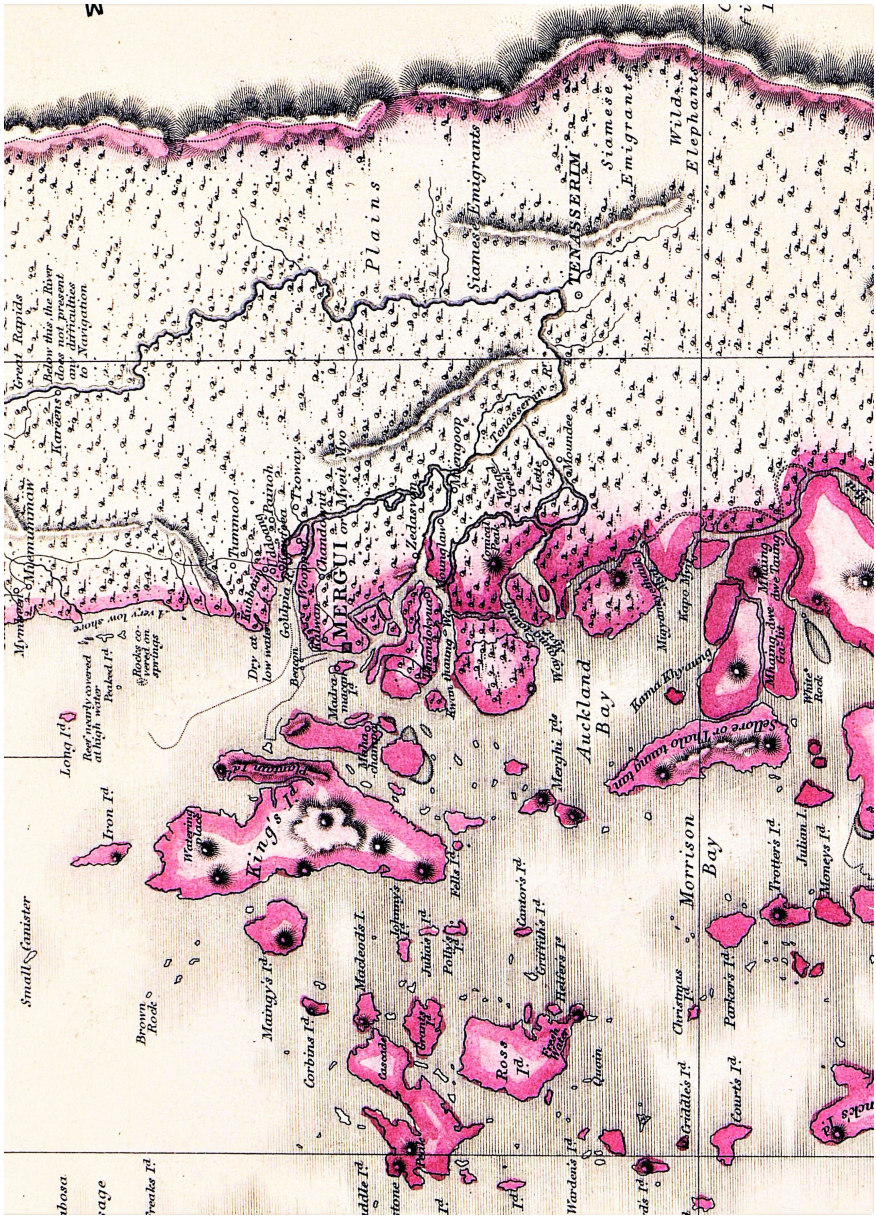
DETAIL OF : "MUANG NAKHON SI THAMMARAT," DAWEI TO KRA, FROM : SANTANEE PHASUK AND PHILIP STOTE, *ROYAL SIAMESE MAPS: WAR AND TRADE IN 19TH CENTURY THAILAND*. (RIVER BOOKS; BANGKOK; 2004).

This fascinating map reveals the Thai perspective of Tenasserim's geography in the 1800s. The Kui-Singkhon route is shown, but the mountains present a well-defined barrier. 'Marit' and 'Tanao' appear as well, along with the river system that Thai forces used to raid the towns until around 1793 (see chapter 29). Access to the Tenasserim River via Suan Pheung is seen at the northern tip of the central range (note 237). Also note that Katan Kyun is called 'Koh Farangset', or 'French Island'.



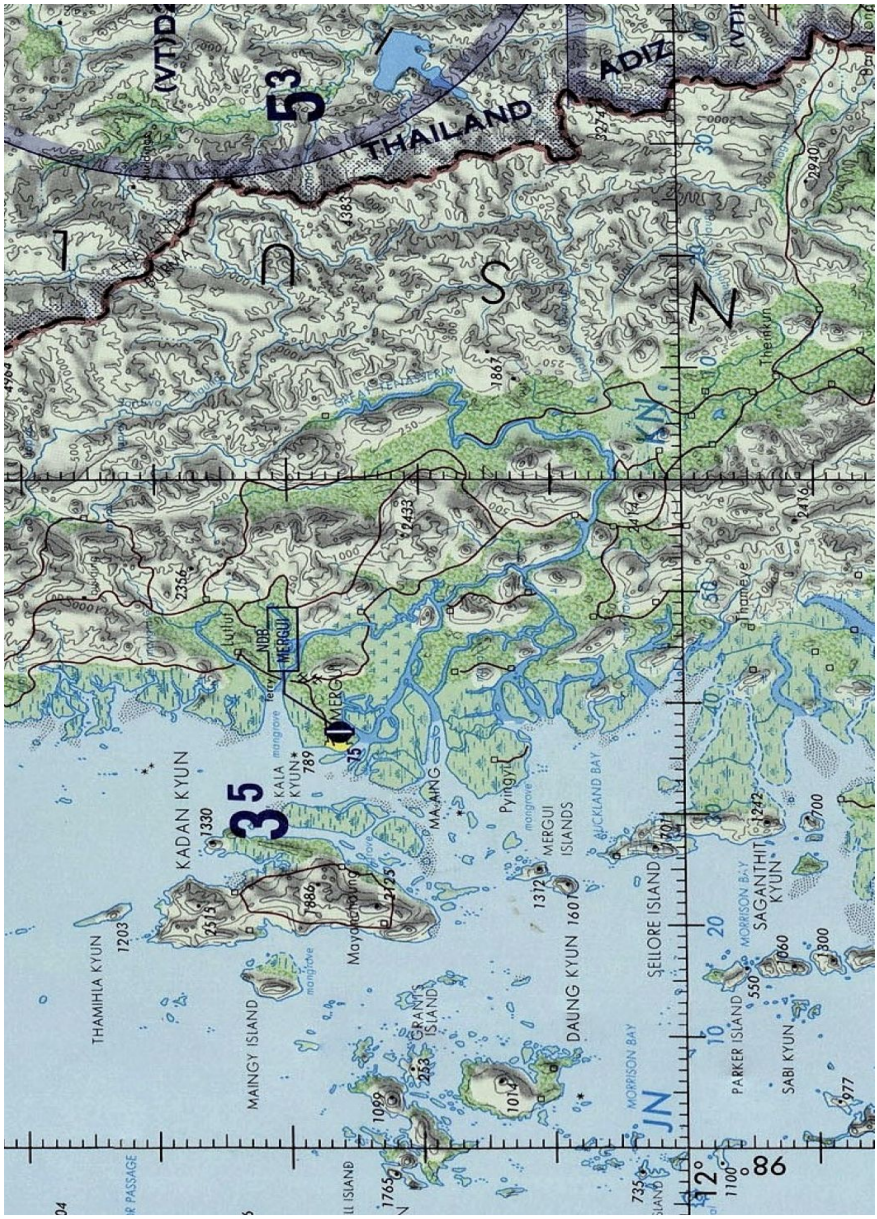
DETAIL OF: "A MAP OF DAWÆ BY A NATIVE OF THE PLACE"

This map was reported by Francis Hamilton in the *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, vol. 9 (1823). The cropped image here shows a Myanmar perspective of the coast between the Dawei Peninsula and Katan Island. Many of the place names are now obsolete, and it is unclear what they represented even at the time. By 1823 the entire region had been largely depopulated by six decades of conflict. For example, the once-great city of Tenasserim, founded in 1277 CE, is shown in ruins. Myeik ('Breit Myo') appears as an isolated stockade which the British seized a year later.



DETAIL OF : "TENASSERIM PROVINCE, DISTRICT OF MERGUI"

Engraved by J. & C. Walker for: *An Atlas of the Southern Part of India*. (Pharoah & Co.; Madras; 1854). Even after thirty years of relative stability, the interior and islands of Tenasserim were still lightly populated. The ancient capital is not even shown, though mention of 'Siamese Emigrants' indicates the region still served as a refuge for people fleeing harsher conditions elsewhere.

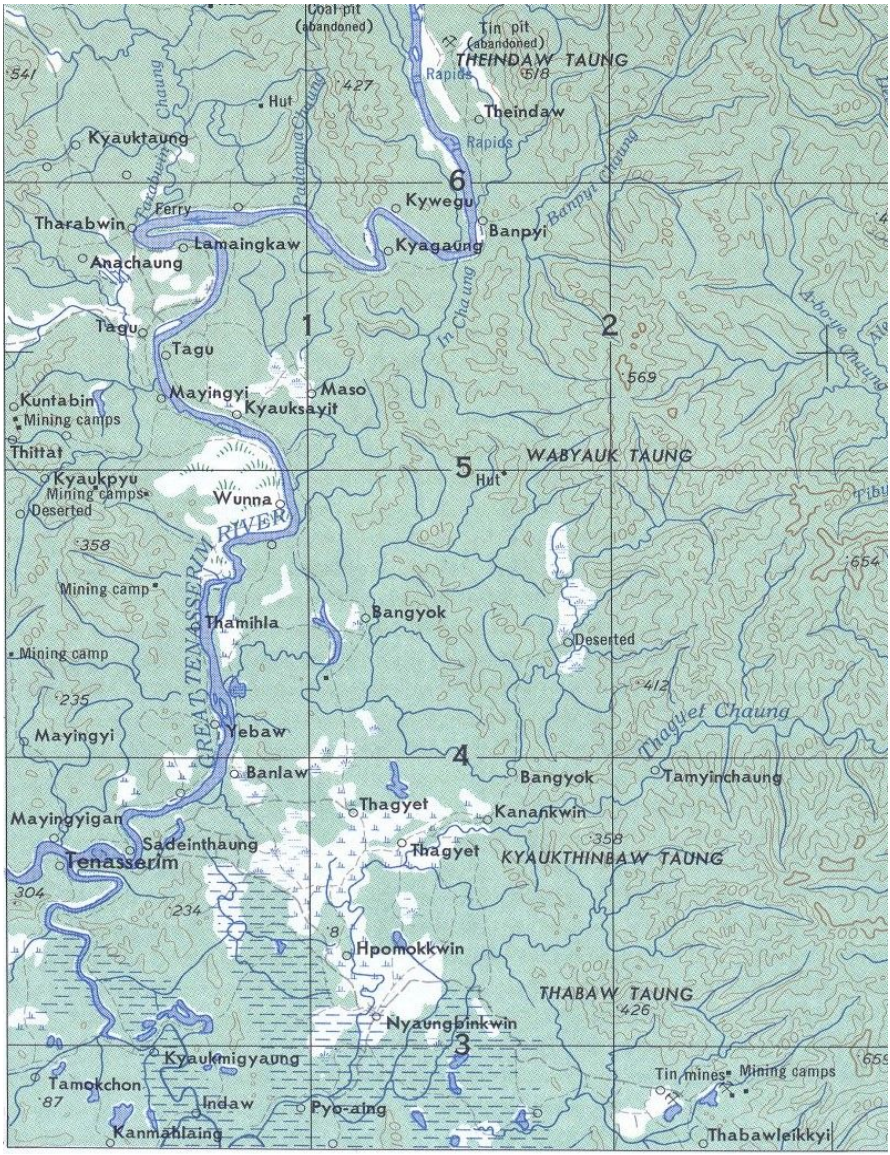


DETAIL OF : "OPERATIONAL NAVIGATION CHART K-9: ANDAMAN ISLANDS, BURMA, KAMPUCHEA, THAILAND," NOAA, 1985

This is a modern aeronautical chart of the same area shown on the previous page. The roads leading southwest to Theinkun and the Thai border show how the route was almost entirely flat. These were fully paved in 2019 but remain closed due to conflict. (Note that dimensions of the image were adjusted to match the 1854 map.)

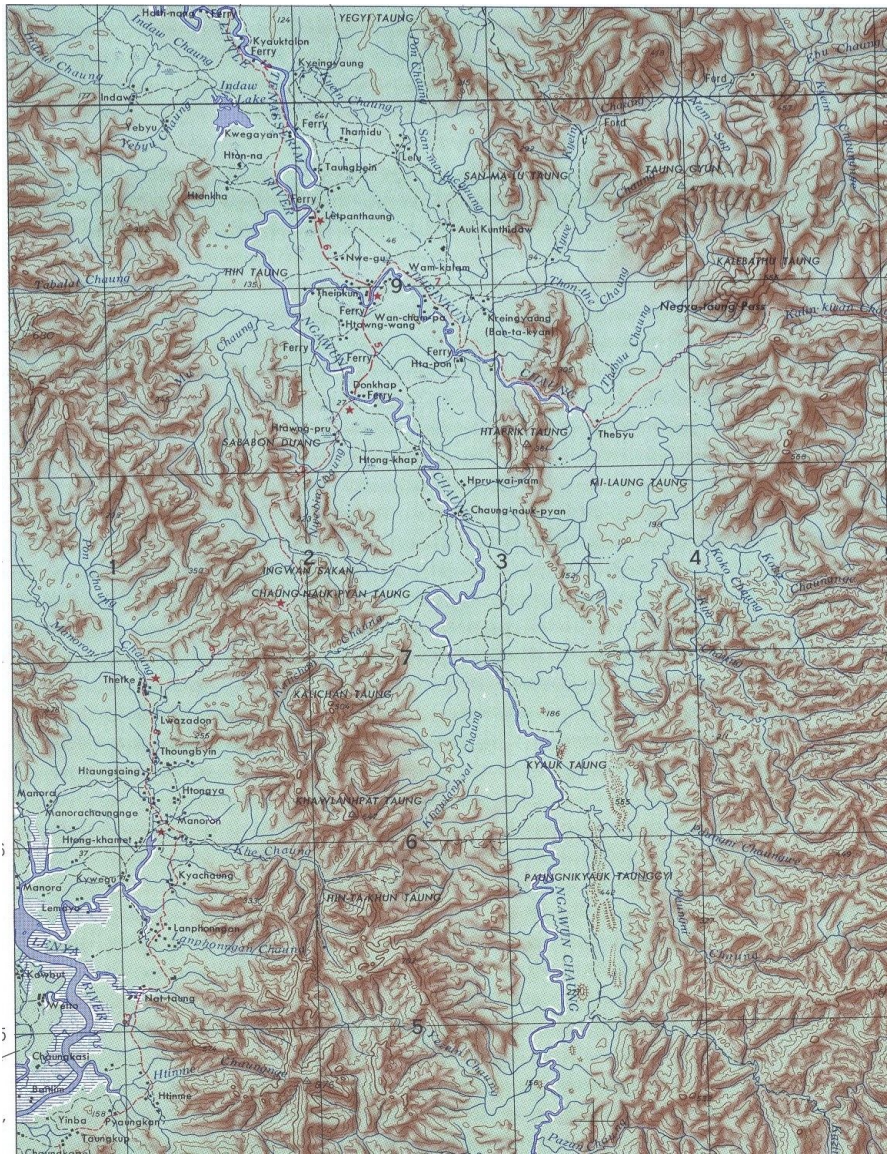
GREATER TENASSERIM RIVER, MERGUI TO MAWTON

detail of : "Mergui" (1962), U.S. Army Map Service, series U-542 sheet ND 47-14.
Height in feet; depth in fathoms.



Greater Tenasserim River from Tenasserim town to Theindaw

detail of : "Hua Hin" (1957). U.S. Army Map Service, series L-509 sheet ND 47-15.



Lesser Tenasserim River from Indaw to the Theinkun River

detail of : “Prachuap Khiri Khan” (1954)

U.S. Army Map Service, series L-509 sheet NC 47-3

Appendix 8

Units of Measurement

length

1 *let thit* (လက်သစ်) ≈ 2 centimeters

1 *maik* (မိုက်) ≈ 15 centimeters

1 *taung* (တောင်) ≈ 46 centimeters (one cubit, or 3 *maik*)

1 *ta* (တာ) ≈ 3.2 meters (or 7 *taung*)

1 *kyo* or *upthapa* (ဥသဘ) ≈ 64 meters (20 *ta*, or 140 *taung*)

weight

1 *peittha* (ပိဿာ) ≈ 1.63 kilograms

1 *tical* (of gold) ≈ 16.33 grams

Note : these values are approximate because they are based on human anatomy and other variables. Additionally, pre-modern measurements varied widely in different markets and even for different products. Naturally, this usually operated to the advantage of the more experienced party. Thus, modern attempts to standardize historical measurements to precise metric values are impossible, if not deceptive.

Appendix 9

Provisional Timeline

(years ce)

Second century : a trans-peninsular entrepôt called 'Tacola' or 'Takkola' exists in the Tenasserim area, according to Ptolemy and the *Milindapaha*.

Third century : possibly the same entrepôt is recorded as 'Tun-sun' or 'T'ouen-siun' by Chinese envoys to Funan, which had seized it as a vassal, per the *Liang-shu*, *Nan-shih* and other Chinese texts.

723 King Kya-Mine rules Kya-Mine city in Thagara State, Yaw Na Ka. He has twenty sons who found the town of Ramawaddy or Kaw Bein, perhaps on the Attaran River in Mon State, around 750 ce.

781 Ramawaddy (Martaban) disappears from Mon chronicles after the death of King Tissa, as the capital was said to have been moved to Prome. The region only resurfaces in 1057 during the invasion of Anawrahta. (Phayre, Ferrand).

783 Founding of Kya-ka-lin on Kanmaw Island by sons of the Ramawaddy founders, and thus grandsons of King Kya-Mine. It likely accesses the portage route via the Lenya River.

Ninth century : Arab sources begin to mention a place called 'Qāqullah' that may have been Kya-ka-lin.

901 Founding of Takwa (Htauk-kwa) by King Bya Mudri on the lower Tenasserim River.

1025 Chola king Rajendra I and Tamil forces make attacks around the Bay of Bengal, including at 'Talaitakkolam', which might have been Takwa.

1057 Anawrahta of Bagan seizes Martaban and perhaps Dawei, though no credible evidence suggests he reached Tenasserim, and his presence there is refuted by its absence in the *Hmannan Yazawin*.

c.1080 An inscription of Maunglaw may have recorded a religious donation by Sawlu of Bagan, though its actual donor and meaning are indeterminate.

Eleventh and twelfth centuries : votive tablets, now in the Theindawgyi Phaya museum of Myeik, suggest religious connections to Bagan.

1121 Decline of Takwa as King Bya Sakkan Peik no longer favors it. He searches for new location.

1122 Ban Shaung founded by Bya Sakkan Peik.

1126 Maw Sunn Gyi founded by Bya Sakkan Peik.

1152 Founding of Aung Thawara by Bya Sakkan Peik in the former country of the Dragon King.

1176 An inscription attributed to Narapatisithu of Bagan claims possession of 'Taluinsare'.

1196 An inscription at Dhammarazika Phaya claims "San[thut], Tanansare, Takwā, Salankre, Tw.....nakuiw." These seem to be Sin Htote, Tāṇa-sirī, Htauk-kwa (not Takuapa), (?) and Tawnauklae, though nothing supports the validity of the claim.

1208 Narapatisithu establishes a monastery at Taung Pi-lar, according to local belief.

1248 Shin Arahan sent on a mission to Tenasserim to obtain a relic of the Buddha, according to an inscription at Izagona monastery in Upper Burma.

1268 Decline of Aung Thawara; end of the Kya-Mine Dynasty; town elders travel to Thagara to ask King Linzin for new ruler. Prince Eekadeh Raja arrives and marries a princess of Aung Thawara. He attempts to establish new city at Tāṇa-sirī.

1269 A Burmese inscription found near Tawnauklae records a temple donation by a wealthy donor.

1271 First attempt at construction of Thayin city (Tāṇa-sirī). It fails due to floods.

1273 Sacrifice of Shin Ma under the city pillar of Tāṇa-sirī in order to quell the floods and allow the city to be built.

1277 Official founding of Tāṇa-sirī by King Eekadeh Raja, after Shin Ma's sacrifice and three years of construction.

Tha Mote Daya Kin made into a seaport at Tawnauklae.

c.1280 Monks invited from Ava to Zedawun.

1281 Inscription at Chaung-u, Sagaing, lists Dawei as the southern limit of Bagan.

c.1282 Founding of Zedawun Phaya and its annual pagoda festival.

1320 Martaban under Saw Thin Maung attacks Tenasserim, and possibly holds it for the following three years (per the *Razadarit Ayedabon*)

1323 Tenasserim rebels against Martaban.

1324 Banya Yandal of Martaban attacks Tenasserim but is defeated.

1348 Prince Byassadi Raja ascends throne of Tāṇa-sirī.

1351 'Tanao-si' listed in Thai chronicles as tributary to Ayutthaya upon the founding of the city, though no evidence supports the claim.

c.1360 King Bahika the Elder of Tāṇa-sirī loses battle with Pegu and flees to Kedah. His brother, Bahika Raja the Younger, regains independence for Tāṇa-sirī .

c.1370 Tāṇa-sirī invaded by Dwayawaddy (Ayutthaya). Repulsed by Bahika Raja with help from Dannyawaddy (Rakhine).

1373 Re-founding of Tāṇa-sirī by Bahika Raja.

Kingdom of Tāṇa-sirī said to extend from Palaw to Kanmaw Island, and from the Petchaburi border to the Mawdaung Pass.

c.1380 Wat Shintaung Phaya thought to have been built by Tai-speakers, according to local belief.

c. Late fourteenth century : Tai inscription in Khmer script place near Tawnauklae.

1428 Monk Ñāṇagambhīra returns from Sri Lanka to Wat Padaeng in the northern Shan plateau by way of Tenasserim.

c.1435 Nicolo de Conti of Venice visits Tenasserim.

1438 Binnya Ran I of Martaban sends 70,000 soldiers under General Dhamma Devi to seize and govern Tenasserim. He succeeds.

1442 Representatives from Tāṇa-sirī and other countries attend the *hti-daw* ceremony of Narapati in Ava.

1444 The Thūpāruṃbhurāḥ Inscription indicates a fluid and complex relationship between Tai-speaking polities such as Ayutthaya, Martaban and Tāṇa-sirī. The actual meaning is uncertain.

1448 Abortive attempt by 'Yodaya Shan' (Thais) to annex the area.

c.1462 Sailing directions by *mu'allim* Ahmad ibn Mājid give a latitude for Takwa, the name of which is also applied to the Mergui Archipelago and its 300 kilometer-long strait.

1478 Shay Haung Mosque founded with donation from Daw Kaw Lee Mar, the Buddhist wife of an Arab merchant who never returned from his travels.

1488 Thais from Ayutthaya assault Dawei but fail to take it. This seems confirmed by the *Tanintharyi Yazawin*, which says the 'Yodaya Shan' made an 'abortive attempt to annex the area' during the reign of Min Khaung Gyi of Ava (r. 1480–1501).

1498 Siam successfully takes Dawei.

c.1500 'the estuary of Markhī' is listed in Mājid's subsequent sailing directions, indicating the Kyaukpya entrance to the river.

1511 Afonso de Albuquerque and the Portuguese take Melaka.

1512 Portuguese envoy António Miranda de Azevedo enters the Kingdom of Ayutthaya by way of Tenasserim.

1520s Portuguese corsairs given license by their government to hunt Muslim shipping in the *Juzur al-Tākwā*, but often fail.

1527 Fernão Nunes sends a letter from Malaca to King João III of Portugal, saying that they need to attack 'Lynguo' in Tenasserim to destroy Gujaratis taking refuge there.

1531 Occupation of Tanintharyi by a Thai prince, possibly a son of Ramathibodi II. King Kyauk Bwa is deposed and the independent kingdom of Tāṇa-sirī ends. The Thai invader moves the ocean port from Tawnauklae to Marit. People resettled from villages around the province to populate the new town.

1534/5 'Bya Ram-saw' of Ayutthaya ascends the throne but loses control of the rebellious Tenasserim coast from Mawlamyine to Mergui.

1538 In border dispute, King Oh-daung of Tāṇa-sirī is killed by Thai King Chairacha. Queen Hnin Nwe taken hostage, and Tāṇa-sirī is occupied by the Thais (Kyaw Din, 1917).

1544 First mention of the name 'Mergui' in European records. Around this time, the geography of the river appears in European maps as an inland sea just west of an extremely narrow neck of land. This indicates that it was viewed as the fastest route across the Peninsula. The errant feature persists on maps for another 150 years.

1548 Tabinshweti of Toungoo defeats Ayutthaya and wins the customs revenue of Tenasserim in a peace negotiation.

1550s Rebellious Tenasserim secedes from both Toungoo and Ayutthaya, and by 1554 the southernmost Burmese outpost was at Ye.

1563 Bayinnaung regains Tenasserim's customs revenue for Toungoo.

1568 Tāṇa-sirī and Dawei rebel against Toungoo and are briefly autonomous.

Cesar Fedrici drifts past Marit in an open boat, but later recounts its global fame as the source of medicinal nipa wine.

1569 Bayinnaung again asserts military control of Ayutthaya, and by extension of Tāṇa-sirī and Dawei as well.

c.1590 Forces sent by Naresuan regain Tenasserim for Siam. It then disappear from Thai chronicles until 1759.

1613 Anaukpetlun of Ava advances on Marit, but is stopped on land by Thai forces and poor logistics, and at sea by Portuguese sailors.

c.1615 Pyi-char village south of Dawei accepted as the border between Myanmar and Ayutthaya.

The 'king of Tanassarim' executes Bengali pirates caught in the Mergui Archipelago, according to the Portuguese *Décadas*.

Seventeenth century : trade flourishes under the rule of Ayutthaya, and huge amounts of goods such as ceramics, textiles, metals, forest products and elephants are transported across the trade route.

1636 Muslim merchants from Masulipatnam use the Tenasserim route to undercut Dutch trade in textiles, thus forcing the VOC to find an alternate means of doing business in Siam.

1652 Okya Tanao-si and 1,500 local men sent to Nakhon Si Thammarat to help Ayutthaya suppress a rebellion there.

1662 French priests use the Tenasserim route to cross the peninsula during the monsoon, giving rise to centuries of belief that it was extraordinarily difficult and dangerous.

1666 Beginning of construction of Taw Kyaung monastery.

1670s Many European 'undesirables' begin using Marit as a refuge.

1682 Mary Povey, wife of Samuel White, dies in Marit, while he serves King Narai of Ayutthaya as a sea captain transporting elephants.

1684 Samuel White appointed *shahbandar* of Marit, and Richard Burnaby appointed *okphra* of Marit, though true power resides with the *okya* in Tanao-si city.

1687 The Mergui Massacre, in which local forces kill troops, representatives and European associates of the English East India Company, which had threatened the town. Samuel White escapes.

1688 French troops are ejected from Marit (and Siam) by Thai troops and local levies summoned by the Okya Tanao-si.

1689 Thammathian, a retainer of Narai's brother, is arrested in Tenasserim for impersonating his former master and making a claim to the Thai throne. He is sent to Ayutthaya, but escapes and leads a destructive rebellion in central Siam which requires an army of 40,000 men to suppress.

1690s Père Tachard, a corrupt priest from France, tries and fails to establish a private trading operation in Tenasserim.

Eighteenth century to 1760 : Ayutthaya continues extensive trade in elephants, textiles, metals and other goods through Tenasserim.

c.1700 French naval fleets begin making extensive use of Katan Island Sound ('French Bay') as a refuge and rendezvous.

1713 A pretender to the Thai throne raises support in Tenasserim and must be suppressed by 10,000 soldiers sent from Ayutthaya.

1713 French warships appear in Mergui roads and cause the population and their 'native king' to flee to the countryside.

1714 Another pretender to the Thai throne is suppressed in Tenasserim.

1731 'Stone of Scandal' placed before the Catholic Church of Marit to prevent priests from spreading Christianity.

1740 Tombstone in Marit marking the passing of Anna Paschoela, a Portuguese-Armenian girl.

1741 Ordination hall for Taw Kyaung built, per its inscription.

1752 Lord of Dawei sends secret letter to VOC offering its entire trade in tin and all other products in exchange for protection. The offer is provisionally accepted in Batavia, but later ignored.

1759 Myanmar forces under Alaungpaya advance down the coast and make plans for an invasion of Siam via Tenasserim.

1760 Alaungpaya takes Marit, which is soon renamed Myeik.

1762 U Dein Kyaw becomes Myeik myowun, initiates master plan of reconstruction including a palisade.

1764 Myeik ordered to prepare for an invasion of Siam by Hsinbyushin.

1765 [Other credible sources such as John Crawfurd and the *General Missiven* indicate that the Thais re-occupied Marit after 1760, but were driven off by another Myanmar attack in 1765.]

1766 Kuiburi destroyed on orders from Phetchaburi to deny it to Myanmar forces.

1767 Sack of Ayutthaya.

1770 Consecration of Myeik royal offices under *myowun* Khema Yaza.

1785 Upgrade of Khe Hill phaya into Laykyunsimi Zedi.

c.1788 Siamese raid on Myeik.

1792 Thai occupation and attack on Pataw-Patit Island by *uparaja* Maha Sura Singhanat, who had already decided that Dawei was indefensible and should be abandoned.

1793 Bangkok and Myanmar conclude a detente that avoids large scale invasions; the Thais largely turn away from Tenasserim.

1805? French warships use Katan Island Sound as a secret rendezvous.

1819 Appointment of U Myat Lay, last myowun of Myeik under Ava.

1824	British East India Company troops seize the entire Tenasserim Coast; it is ceded to them two years later in the Treaty of Yandabo.
1829	Rebellion in Dawei led by Maung Da, who had previously surrendered the town to the British. Captain C.S. Buxton, in charge of Mergui, disgracefully abandons his post due to false rumors.
1837	Dr. and Madame Helfer arrive in Mergui; the doctor explores the province and islands for the next few years, then is killed by Andaman Islanders in 1840.
c.1912	A large town fire in Mergui destroys many of region's historical materials.
1921	Laykyunsimi Cetiya demolished and rebuilt. Reliquary items recovered.
1927	Mergui's foreshore reclaimed and sea wall built.
1929	The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* is first published.
1930s	Mergui is a pivotal stop for airman adventurers seeking to fly between Europe and Australia in stages.
1942	British flee from Mergui as the Japanese army advances.
1945	Japanese occupation ends; British resume provisional control.
1948	Union of Burma becomes independent.
1962	Military coup mostly closes Tenasserim to the outside world.
1989	A huge and suspicious fire destroys much of the town, including historical materials.
1929	The *Tanintharyi Yazawin* is re-published.
2015	The region opens under Myanmar's democracy.

Abbreviations

BEFEO	Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient
GM	*Generale Missiven*
GTT	*As Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*
IOR	India Office Records
JRBS	Journal of the Burma Research Society
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSEAS	Journal of Southeast Asian Studies
JSS	Journal of the Siam Society
MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit
MNA	Myanmar National Archives
OBEP	*Old Burma – Early Pagan*, by G.H. Luce & Bo-Hmu Ba Shin
PT/TT	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon
VOC	Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie

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Shin Makan, also called Madramacan or Badrmacan.
Pataw-Patit Island, Myeik. see note 35.

One-hundred years ago, a collaboration of people retrieved palm-leaf and parabaik manuscripts which contained the story of their remote and beautiful land: Tanintharyi, or Tenasserim, now located in Myanmar. As lead compiler and editor, U Gyi Sein formed them into a readable book. It was published in 1929, but was barely read outside the region.

This edition is an annotated translation of the Burmese original. With extensive research and assistance from the people of Tanintharyi, Sein's text reveals a vibrant world hidden behind forests and monsoons. Though long overshadowed by neighbors, the region has its own unique history of diversity, community, deeply held traditions, and political autonomy. This book reveals that past, and in the process it replaces errant assumptions made from afar.